

**GROWTH OF COMMODITY MARKETS IN GUNTUR DISTRICT ;
(1870 — 1930)**

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the Degree of
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

Vakulabharanam Rajagopal

CENTRE FOR HISTORICAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110 067

1989



जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY

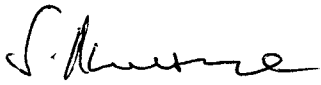
NEW DELHI-110067

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
CENTRE FOR HISTORICAL STUDIES

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this dissertation entitled "GROWTH OF COMMODITY MARKETS IN GUNTUR DISTRICT (1870-1930)" submitted by Mr. Vakulabharanam Rajagopal in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY (M.Phil.) degree of this University, has not been previously submitted for any degree of this or any other University. This is his own work.

We recommend this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.


Prof. S. BHATTACHARYA
Supervisor


Prof. K.N. PANIKKAR
Chairperson

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foremost, I thank my supervisor Prof. S. Bhattacharya for his careful perusal of the draft and incisive comments on it. Working with him, I learnt my basics of how to use and interpret evidence. Dr. G.N. Rao and D. Rajasekhar of the Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum introduced me to the sources of South Indian economic history. I also had useful discussions with them. Dr. Neeladri Bhattacharya of the Centre for Historical Studies helped me formulate my research problem in a clearer way. Dr. M. Sunder Raj of Tamilnadu State Archives, Dr. Krishna Murthy and Sri Muniratnam of the A.P. State Archives were very helpful. Om Prakash did a neat job of typing at short notice. I am deeply thankful to all of them.

New Delhi,
the 10th August, 1989.


VAKULABHARANAM RAJAGOPAL.

_C_O_N_T_E_N_T_S_

| | <u>Page</u> |
|--|-------------|
| CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| CHAPTER II GROWTH AND COMMERCIALISATION OF THE AGRARIAN ECONOMY | 9 |
| CHAPTER III COTTON AND RICE MARKETS | 33 |
| CHAPTER IV HANDLOOM ECONOMY AND TRADE | 71 |
| CHAPTER V CONCLUSION | 117 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 121 |

*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the agrarian history of modern Andhra, middle of the nineteenth century marks a watershed. The region, like many others in India underwent deindustrialisation in the 19th century, most starkly represented by the decline of Machilipatnam. Agricultural economy of the region was ⁱⁿ no better condition. This was when irrigation dams were thrown across the main rivers of the region, the Godavari and the Krishna. The input of irrigation provided a strong impetus, and the sagging agrarian economy revived and registered growth.

In the wake of this agricultural development, trade in the agricultural commodities grew. Certain other factors like external demand, growth of transport, new technology also greatly aided the growth of commodity markets. It will be our endeavour to depict and analyse this process as it unfolded in Guntur district.

Administrative History of Guntur:¹

Before Guntur came into the ambit of European influence, it was under the political control of the Asaf Jahis. Authority over the outlying divisions of the Golconda Province was delegated by the Nizam-ul-Mulk to his subordinates who effectively maintained order. The Province of Golconda comprised of five Nawabs' charges of Arcot, Uddapah, Kurnool

1. This section has been written based mainly on the information provided in Gordon Mackenzie, A Manual of the
contd...

Rajahmundry and Srikakulam. The Nawab of Rajahmundry Anwar-ud-din (1725-41) ruled over the territory which includes the present Guntur district.

When Nizam-ul-Mulk died in 1748, there was a quick change of rulers before Salabat Jung stabilised as the ruler. Salabat Jung took help from the French to come to power. He rewarded the French in 1752 with the grant of Kondavidu Province. Guntur town seems to have come into existence only during French occupation, though the village of Ramachandrapuram Agraharam which had been later absorbed by Guntur was much older. The French built a fort to the east of old Guntur. Though the province was still called Kondavidu Circar, the French now established their headquarters in Guntur. This shift of headquarters to Guntur by the French was probably because of the two tanks near the site of the new town which supplied water for the French camp. This site was also conveniently located for communication with Kondapalle or Machilipatnam. The Chintapalle zamindar of the district built a residence in Guntur to be near the French Commander. Other houses were erected to the north of the Black Tank and this new site was called the 'New Guntur'. This new town gradually increased in importance.

contd...

Kistna District in the Presidency of Madras, (Madras, 1883) and Andhra Pradesh District Gazetteers, Guntur (Hyderabad, 1977).

Salabat Jung was deposed by his brother Nizam Ali Khan with the help of the British and Nizam Ali proclaimed himself the Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah II in 1761. In 1766 the five Northern Circars of Ellore, Chicacole, Rajahmundry, Condapilly and Guntur were ceded by the Nizam by a treaty to the English on the English agreeing to pay an annual sum or to furnish military assistance when required.² Basalat Jung, a brother of both the deposed Salabat Jung and Nizam Ali held control over the jagir of Guntur. His control over Guntur was allowed to continue by the British upto his death. Basalat Jung died in 1782. British took control over Guntur finally in 1788.

At the time of the British occupation of the district, there were several zamindars in the district who served the function of renters under the Nizam rule of the several such zamindaris the most powerful and prominent were those belonging to the families of Vasireddi, Malrazu, Manik Rao and Manuru. Villages were rented out to the zamindars on five year basis for two thirds of the gross produce. Madras Government effected a permanent settlement with the zamindars in 1802 for the collection of revenue. Each zamindar was to collect one-half of the harvest, remit two-thirds of that

2. The five Northern Circars finally came into British possession in 1823 by a lump sum payment to the Nizam government in lieu of an annual tribute.

half to the government and keep the rest. All haveli (government) land also was divided into mutthas assessed and granted or sometimes sold to the zamindars in return for an agreed revenue.³ But the zamindars were unable to fulfil the obligation of regularly paying the revenues to the government because of their mismanagement and expenditure. The zamindars surrendered their estates to the governments in 1842 with the hope that the estates would be restored to them after things were set right. Instead the government decided to sell the estates. When no purchasers were forthcoming, government purchased them in 1846. Along with the ceded Districts acquired by the British in 1801, Palnad also came under the control of the Guntur Collector and remained under the direct management of the Collector.

Guntur continued as a separate district upto 1859. It then comprised of the taluks of Prattipad, Mangalagiri, Bapatla, Ponnore, Martoor, Repalle, Tenali, Guntur, Kurapad, Kondivid, Narasaraopet, Vinukonda, Dachehalli and Thimmarakota.

During 1859-60 the three old districts of Guntur, Masulipatam and Rajahmundry were reorganized into the districts of Krishna and Godavari. Krishna district comprised

3. R.E. Frykenberg, Guntur District: 1788-1848. A History of Local Influence and Central Authority in South India (London, 1965), pp. 33 and 41.

of the revenue divisions of Guntur and Machilipatnam. Guntur division consisted of the taluks of Guntur, Repalle, Bapatla, Narasaraopet, Vinukonda, Sattenapalle and Palnad. This administrative arrangement continued upto 1904 when a new Guntur district was created out of the Guntur division of the Krishna district combined with the Ongole taluk of the Nellore district. The new Guntur district consisted of the taluks of Tenali, Guntur, Sattenapalle, Palnad, Bapatla, Narasaraopet, Vinukonda and Ongole.⁴ Tenali taluk was bifurcated in 1909 leading to the formation of a new Repalle taluk. These are the major administrative changes in the district until independence.

Traditional Economy:

Before the introduction of Ryotwari in the whole of the Guntur, the local economy rested on the basis of the zamindaries. About 10,000 Provincial (Golconda) soldiers were stationed in Guntur and another 10,000 local levies were maintained by the zamindars. Demand for military wares spurred the local economy and money was spent freely by the military personnel in the purchase of goods and services of the local artisans, tradesmen, shopkeepers and

4. In this study, we leave the Ongole taluk out because of the problems of comparability and also because it was not significant for the commodity markets we study.

entertainers.⁵ Luxury items demanded by zamindars were imported from far away places. Pearls and precious stones were brought by merchants from Ceylon and other places by sea, shawls from Kashmir, horses and camels from Arabia and Kabul by sea, elephants from Mysore, gold thread from Banaras, velvets and brocades from Gujarat. This economy of luxury items disintegrated after the demise of the zamindars by the end of the first half of the 19th century.⁶

The agriculture of the district was only partially supported by irrigation. Villages along the bank of the Krishna and a channel flowing from the Krishna near Sitanagar to the sea at Nizampatnam, villages were in a very different state from those in the western part of the district. These irrigated villages were less affected by the 1833 famine. Dachepalli village in the Palnad taluk (under Ryotwari) which got its water supply from Nagaleru, a tributary of Krishna also provided a sharp contrast to the unirrigated tracts of the same taluk. Cotton was chiefly raised in the Palnad taluk. Tobacco was principally grown in the eastern taluks.⁷

5. R.E. Frykenberg, op. cit., p.3.

6. Goldingham Report in Madras Government Revenue Department Consultations, April 1841 (Vol.518 at the TN Archives, Madras).

7. This and the subsequent discussion is based on the Goldingham Report, op. cit.

The principal manufacturing places in the district were Vetapalem, Mangalagiri and Rajapet (Narasaraopet). Dhoties and upper clothes, women's clothes of all kinds, coarse clothes, handkerchiefs, turbans etc. were manufactured in Vetapalem. Vetapalem and the adjacent towns exported chiefly women's clothes and handkerchiefs to Madras and Chittoor. Mangalagiri and the adjacent villages produced chiefly handkerchiefs and lungis for export to Hyderabad and Nagpur. Drop in demand affected the manufacturers of these places. Handkerchiefs were manufactured in Narasaraopet for export to Bombay and the Malabar coast. Saltpetre, iron, snuff, cumblies (blankets), carpets, toddy, jaggery etc. were among the other manufacturers of the district.

Salt was an important manufacture under government control in the district. In 1801-02, revenue from the sale of this article was Rs.15,000 approximately. In 1929-30 revenue from the sale of salt shot upto Rs.4,28,000 . After that year, salt revenue generally kept above Rs.3 lakhs. There were four salt cotauras in the district, the principal one at Chinnaganjam.

The principal articles of export from the district were grain, and oilseeds. Tobacco, some varieties of dry grain, soapnuts, cloth and saltpetre also formed part of export trade by sea. The import trade consisted almost entirely of paddy and rice. Coir coconuts and dammer building

materials were also imported in small measure. Sea-borne trade increased after the establishment of the British rule in the district. Reasons cited for this in the Goldingham Report are that vessels that came in the former period were seldom from foreign countries and brought only coconut and cowries. People were not much acquainted with sea navigation. Trade could not be carried on to any significant extent under the political uncertainties of the former rule.

CHAPTER II

GROWTH AND COMMERCIALISATION
OF THE AGRARIAN ECONOMY

Ryotwari system of revenue was introduced in Guntur district from 1865. Guntur at that time was a subsistence production region, producing mainly inferior foodgrains. Nearly 80% of the cultivated area was under foodgrains.¹ The transformation of the economy from this state to a highly market-oriented state was effected by several factors which will be discussed below.

The construction of Krishna irrigation works in 1855 was a watershed in the evolution of the agrarian economy of the region. Availability of water for the irrigation of cultivable land made cultivation more secure and induced the ryots to go in for high value crops like paddy. The ryots took some time before they appreciated the advantages of irrigation. The initial high incidence of land revenue demand was eased to some extent when the price of paddy started going up.²

-
1. Nata Duvvury, Commercial Capital and Agrarian Structure - A Study of Guntur Tobacco Economy (Ph.D. Thesis submitted in 1985, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi), p. 26.
 2. For a thorough discussion of the changes in the agrarian economy of Krishna district in the post Krishna Zamindar period, see G.N. Rao, "Transition from Subsistence to Commercialised Agriculture - A Study of Krishna District of Andhra, C. 1850-1900", in Economic and Political Weekly, vol. XX, Nos. 25 and 26, Review of Agriculture, June 22-29, 1985.

In order to pay land revenue to the state, the ryots had to market at least a part of their produce. They found it paying to go in for the cultivation of high value cash crops. Price movements of different crops also influenced the ryots in the choice of crops. Besides, population pressure combined with the deindustrialization of the 19th century worsened the land-man ratio. It has been argued that two different responses were possible given this scenario. The first would be an intensification of subsistence cultivation. The second response, as happened in Guntur's case, was the adoption of high value cash crops, under favourable terms of trade and the possibility of unrestricted imports of foodgrains.³

There was an increase of 85% in the area cultivated between 1865 and 1900. After the turn of the century, there was only a limited expansion. Cultivated area increased by 16% between 1900 and 1930. Cultivated area could now be increased only with an extension of the irrigation facility.⁴

There was a steady increase in the area under industrial crops, vis-a-vis foodgrains. Area under foodgrains decreased from 79% in 1868 to 68% in 1930-31.

3. Nata Divvury, op. cit., p.38.

4. Ibid., p.27.

Table 2.1: Area under Foodgrains and Industrial Crops in the Guntur District

| | Gross Cropped Area | Foodgrains | Industrial Crops |
|---------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1868 | 984,503 | 785,308 (79%) | 199,195 (21%) |
| 1881-82 | 1,451,368 | 1,056,124 (72%) | 395,244 (28%) |
| 1902-03 | 2,239,182 | 1,645,932 (73%) | 593,250 (27%) |
| 1912-13 | 2,442,865 | 1,679,533 (68%) | 763,232 (32%) |
| 1925-26 | 2,404,302 | 1,526,746 (67%) | 777,556 (33%) |
| 1930-31 | 1,977,109 | 1,348,108 (68%) | 629,001 (32%) |

Source: Wilson Settlement Scheme Report, Kistna Manual, Statistical Appendices to Guntur District Gazetteers (1906, 1915, 1929, 1933).

In terms of natural endowment, crops raised, and variation on the development of agriculture, Guntur district has been aptly split up by Nata Duvvury into the "delta, backward dry and dynamic dry regions". While Tenali, Repalle and Bapatla taluks constituted the 'delta region', Palnad and Vinkonda taluks constituted the 'backward dry region' and Guntur, Narasaraopet, Sattenapalle and Ongole constituted the 'dynamic dry region'.⁵

Between 1865-66 and 1930-31, area under inferior foodgrains declined in the delta regions. With the increase in the availability of Krishna irrigation water, cultivation of paddy became more widespread. Production and marketing of paddy and rice will be discussed elaborately in the next chapter.

5. Ibid., p.31.

Table 2.2: Extension of Area under Irrigation in the Guntur district

| Year | Area under Irrigation (in acres) |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| 1901-02 | 280,000 |
| 1904-05 | 300,000 |
| 1920-21 | 304,194 |
| 1923-24 | 319,407 |
| 1928-29 | 332,846 |

Source: S. Venkateswaran, Second Resettlement Scheme Report of the Guntur District (1936).

But enough water was not provided by the Krishna system to raise a second paddy crop. The irrigation season was not long enough to allow two harvests in a year. Water supply by canals upto March was essential for a second crop of paddy, but the supply stopped in December.⁶ Therefore, as a second crop in the irrigated areas, fodder was raised. Acreage under fodder expanded to 27% of the cropped area by 1930-31. In the backward dry region, area under inferior cereals continued to expand, while in the case of the dynamic dry region, it dropped from 77% to 54%.⁷

In the matter of industrial crops, the backward dry region essentially had a two crop culture of cotton and

6. Evidence of R. Morris, Collector of Krishna, Indian Irrigation Commission, Madras Evidence, p. 312.

7. Nata Divvury, op. cit., p. 31.

oilseeds. Area under oilseeds increased at the expense of cotton. These two crops together accounted for 20% of the cropped area of Palnad and Vrukonda taluks.

In the dynamic dry region, cotton, oilseeds and condiments were the important industrial crops in 1865 in that order. But by 1930, oilseeds (mostly groundnut) became the most important, followed by condiments. As the third important crop, cotton was displaced by tobacco.⁸

Among the other crops, indigo was quite a significant industrial crop cultivated upto the end of the century. But with the invention of the German synthetic substitute, indigo was no longer profitable to cultivate and went out of cultivation. Castor was the traditional oilseed of the region. It declined because of the increasing acreage given to valuable commercial crops. Chillies were an important commercial crop and commanded a good market outside the Province. Some of the irrigated land was under the cultivation of turmeric.

Groundnut and tobacco were the most important industrial crops of the twentieth century. Popularity of these two crops was attributable to the keen demand for them and the good prices fetched by them. Groundnut steadily increased in importance since 1920-21. But the increase since 1927-28 was dramatic and in 1932-33, it occupied an area of 318,256

8. Ibid.

acres. Tobacco occupied an area of 44,563 acres in 1905-06 and increased to 111,241 acres in 1932-33. It was cultivated mainly in Guntur, Bapatla and Narasaraopet taluks.⁹

Table 2.3: Acreage under some Industrial Crops in Guntur district in the 20th century

| | 1902-03 | 1912-13 | 1925-26 | 1930-31 |
|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Tobacco | 39,627 | 57,440 | 70,474 | 65,270 |
| Cotton | - | 367,598 | 236,803 | 138,424 |
| Oilseeds | 67,909 | 70,736 | 118,663 | 332,392 |
| Groundnut | - | 1,766 | 61,171 | 304,834 |

Note: 1902-03, groundnut was included under oilseeds, but its acreage was insignificant.

Source: Statistical Appendices to Guntur District Gazetteer, (1906, 1915, 1929, 1933).

Agricultural Marketing & Credit:

The rich agriculturists of the Guntur district owned godowns in their villages if connected with towns by good roads, or in towns themselves. In such godowns, they stored the produce of their lands, produce they bought as part of their trading business, produce sold to them by needy ryots and the produce they got in return for the money but by them previously. They sold the produce to the merchant in the

9. S. Venkateswaran, Second Resettlement Scheme Report of Guntur District (1936), p.49. (Hereafter called Venkateswaran Report)

town when the market was favourable. The less prosperous agriculturists sold their produce to the dealers in their villages. The dealers sold it in the nearby towns at a small margin of profit for themselves. The merchants from the towns who bought from the dealers, if they were mill-owners, milled the paddy, refined turmeric and tobacco, shelled groundnut and compressed cotton to export these commodities to large trading centres within the country and abroad. If such merchants were not mill-owners, they either sold to the mill-owners or exported raw goods to various trading centres.¹⁰

Ryots of the upland taluks were able to sell their tobacco and groundnut direct to the exporters. In the case of chillies, paddy, cotton etc. they sold through the commission agents who often advanced money against the produce delivered and stocked them on their behalf for a time to fetch the best price.¹¹

The ryots took loans from the Vaisyas and merchants of the towns, rich ryots of different villages, inamdars and absentee landholders, Marwaris, cooperative societies

10. Written Evidence of K. Sriramulu, Tenali in Madras Provincial Banking Enquiry Commission Report (Madras, 1930), Vol.II - Written Evidence, p.593. (hereafter called MPBEC Report)

11. Written Evidence of V. Venkata Punnayya in ibid., p.226.

and so on. In Guntur, Krishna and the two Godavari districts, Marwaris came to be the dominant suppliers of credit to the farmers, replacing the Vaisyas. They hailed from Gujarat and Rajasthan. Some of the local Marwari firms were branches of the bigger firms working in Bombay and other places as in the case of Sir Kasturichand Hanumandas of Tenali, while others had transactions with bigger firms of other places.¹²

Vaisyas were closely related to the process of agricultural marketing, they were often commission agents. They lent to people in their early stage of indebtedness, when they had not yet reached insolvency. But Marwaris lent to all people, took greater risks, charged higher rates of interest and adopted stringent methods of recovery. For this reason, they were also more unpopular with the ryots than the Vaisyas.¹³

The banking facilities which developed in Guntur and the neighbouring districts did not help the agriculturists. Both the Imperial Bank of India and the Indian Bank had branches in Guntur town and worked on similar lines. They gave loans to traders on the pledge of produce stored in

12. Written Evidence of K. Sriramulu in MPBEC Report, Vol.II, p.598.

13. Oral Evidence of D.S. Sastri in MPBEC Report, Vol.IV - Oral Evidence, p.24.

godowns. The Andhra Bank gave loans only to ryots holding substantial property on pro-notes with sureties. None of these banks gave loans to the small agriculturists.¹⁴

Cooperative banks played a very small part in agricultural marketing. The bulk of the finance required for the purpose was supplied by the branches of the Imperial Bank of India and the Indian Bank to the wholesale merchants and agents of the upcountry and foreign firms.¹⁵

Growth of Transport:

Internal trade of the Madras presidency was very limited in magnitude in the first half of the 19th century. The agriculture of the presidency suffered under the impact of a long drawn agricultural depression. Also, want of communications and levy of oppressive transit duties restricted trade. After 1850, relative development of communications, the abolition of transit duties, and customs duties on interportal trade led to an impressive increase in the internal trade.¹⁶

14. Written Evidence of N. Ranganatha Achariyar in MPBEC Report, Vol.III, p.848.

15. Ibid., p.850.

16. S. Srinivasa Raghavaiyangar, Memorandum on the Progress of the Madras Presidency during the last forty years of British Administration (Madras, 1893), p.65.

In the Guntur district, there were five main lines of road by 1870.¹⁷ The high road from Madras to Calcutta ran from Inkollu in the district upto Sitanagaram on the right bank of the Kistna opposite Bezwada passing on the way through Parchuru, Prattipad and Guntur. The portion of this road from Inkollu and Prattipad was impassable by carts during the rainy season. The second one was a coast road from the south to Masulipatam, chiefly used by passengers in the dry weather. The third road was from Ongole to Hyderabad and passed through the Palnad. This road was frequently used in the earlier times by troops marching from Madras to Hyderabad and vice-versa. This was also used by bandies (bullock-carts) carrying stores from Madras to the great military stations north of the Krishna river. The facilities of sea communication to Machilipatnam and Kakinada and from there by canal to Bezwada on the Hyderabad road and had reputation of it being a 'cholera road' were the reasons why the troops stopped using this road. A fourth road ran southwest from Guntur through Narasaraopet and Vinukonda to the ceded districts. It was expected that the railway to Ouddapah would change the direction of the trade to the coast taking place by this road; Vinukonda

17. W. Wilson, First Settlement Scheme Report of the Guntur Division of the Kistna District (Madras, 1868), Chapter 5 on Communications (pages not numbered in the Report).

was an important town on this route, with lot of merchants, and served as the entrepot of the trade of the coast and the ceded districts. The fifth road was a western road from Guntur to the Palnad. It was the "cotton road" passing through Sattenapalle, Piduguralla and Dachepalli by which this staple of the Palnad and neighbouring areas was brought to Guntur and the coast. Apart from these, there were other minor roads which connected different parts of the district. Extension of roads continued throughout the second half of the 19th century.

Railway was first introduced in the ceded districts and first railway line in the coastal tract was laid only during 1889-90. The line connecting Guntakal on the west and Vijayawada on the east passed through the district (Southern Mahratta Railway). Another line connecting Madras to Vijayawada was completed by 1898 and it passed through Tenali (Madras Railway).¹⁸ By 1903 there were 143 miles of open railway line in Guntur district.¹⁹ By the same year, considerable increase in the number of miles of road within the district was also noticed. The earliest Local Fund report

18. Andhra Pradesh District Gazetteers: Guntur (Hyderabad, 1977), p.188.

19. G.F. Paddison, First Resettlement Scheme Report of Guntur District in Madras Government, Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), Proceedings No.463, 17 December 1903, p.58.

for 1872-73 mentioned 300 miles of maintained road at that time, whereas by 1903 the mileage increased to 570 of which 83 were unmetalled. The proportion of metalled to total road length also constantly increased over time.²⁰ By 1912-13, total mileage increased further to 875 with 782 metalled and 93 unmetalled, and by 1925-26, total mileage was 1134 with 947 metalled and 187 unmetalled.²¹

Absence of railway during the 1876-78 famine certainly contributed to the high mortality in the tract, especially in the upland taluks. Wherever regions of the presidency were connected by the railways, hundreds of tons of grain was imported which mitigated the food shortage. After the introduction of railway, there was a tremendous increase in the internal traffic between various trade centres, and export-import trade in which thousands of carts took part with railways. Every village had several and every town hundreds of carts which were extensively built in many places. Prices of export commodities rapidly increased after the introduction of railway. With the rise in grain prices, land prices also rose, especially such land as in the vicinity of railway. Production of commercial crops

20. Ibid.

21. Statistical Appendix to Guntur Gazetteer (Madras, 1929), p.4.

was also greatly stimulated.²²

TH-3478

Extension of railways and feeder roads also resulted in a phenomenal increase in the use of carts to carry commodities for export from the interior to the railway station from where it was sent over large distances. In the presidency as a whole, there were 90,000 carts in 1850, 284,000 in 1877-78 and 436,000 in 1893.²³ When the commodity had to be transported over small distances such as thirty miles or so, carts held an advantage over railwayys due to delay in getting trains and the low rates at which the ryots could afford to hire out their carts during the non-cultivating season.

The Madras-Calcutta main line completed in 1898 (already mentioned) passed through the towns of Ongole, Chirala, Bapatla and Tenali. The total distance traversed by this line was almost 100 miles. The metre gauge main line which crossed the peninsula east to west from Masulipatam to Marmugoa passed in a south westerly direction through the heart of the upland taluks of Guntur, Narasaraopet and Vinukonda and also through a portion of Sattenapalle taluk. Distance

22. A quotation from Nicholson's Manual of Coimbatore quoted in S.S. Raghavaiyangar, op. cit., pp.61-62. Though this description is specifically about Coimbatore, economic impact of railway was similarly manifested in other parts too.

23. Ibid.

DISS
332.644095484
R1372 Gr



TH3478

82
E

traversed by this line in the district, was 82 miles. Two important branch lines were opened in 1916 and 1930. In 1916, the Guntur-Tenali, Repalle line (broad gauge) which covered a distance of 37 miles was opened, connecting rich paddy producing tracts with the important trade centres of Tenali and Guntur. The Guntur-Macherla branch line, opened in 1930, covered a distance of 80 miles. This line facilitated communication and transport of foodgrains to the outlying stations of the backward taluks of Sattenapalle and Palnad. These taluks had low rainfall and therefore frequently were deficient in foodgrain production. Before the Guntur-Macherla branch line was opened, cotton from Palnad and Sattenapalle used to be taken by a long and tedious road route to Narasaraopet from where it was sent to Guntur. The new branch line connected the above two taluks direct to Guntur.²⁴

Comparing the condition of roads in upland taluks and delta taluks of Guntur district in 1903, the special settlement officer commented that their condition was on the whole good in the uplands but bad in the delta.²⁵ The important taluk centre of Repalle had no road fit for motor transport all the year round. Some of the important trade centres in

24. Venkateswaran Report, p. 29.

25. Paddison Report, op. cit., pp. 3 and 66.

the interior were cut off for more than nine months in the year.²⁶ This situation was somewhat rectified in later years. Most of the villages in the delta not served by roads were within easy reach of the navigable Krishna canals.

Talking about the prospect of canal transport in 1868, Wilson in his Settlement Scheme Report said that there would eventually be three lines of navigable canals. These three canals were the Western Bank channel, Nizampatnam canal and Commamoor channel.²⁷ Length of navigable canals dug by the government was 110 miles in 1876 and increased to 146 in 1902. Cotton, paddy, rice, salt and building materials were some of the important goods transported through the canals.²⁸ In the coasting or interportal trade within the Presidency four ports of the district Ipurupalem, Nizampatnam, Motupalle and Kottapalem were prominent. The principal exports from these ports were grain, pulses and oilseeds and the principal imports gold and silver coin, bullion, cloth and thread.²⁹

After the Madras-Vijayawada broad gauge main line was opened in 1898, the four ports engaged in coasting trade received a severe setback. Opening of the Buckingham canal

26. A. Vipan, Scheme of Road Development for the Madras Presidency (Madras, 1935), p.102.

27. Wilson Report, op. cit.

28. Paddison Report, op. cit., p.3.

29. Wilson Report, Chapter VII, Markets and Ports.

to Madras also had similar impact on the ports of the district. It ran parallel to the coast at a short distance from it, and connected Madras with many salt factories, casuarina topes and shell deposits along the coast. About 50,000 tons of rice, 4,000 tons of salt and a large number of minor items were brought annually into Madras by this route around 1930.³⁰

The three main irrigation canals in the delta continued to serve the need of cargo transport within the district.³¹ These served as highways along which a vast amount of paddy was taken to markets, ports and rail centres for despatch to distant places. But they were not navigable round the year. They were closed for silt clearance and for want of water for a period varying from two to six months.³²

There was an enormous increase of trade and commercial activity in the district during our period. The volume of goods traded annually increased from 41,335 tons during 1886-87 to 1888-89, to 493,596 tons by the end of 1920s. Rail traffic increased by more than 130% between 1909 and 1930-31. Inward traffic of goods by rail to the Guntur station kept pace with the outward traffic from that station.³³

30. MPBEC Report, Vol.I, p.116.

31. Venkateswaran Report, p.29.

32. MPBEC Report, Vol.I, p.116.

33. Nata Duvvury, op. cit., pp.42-43.

Introduction of rail and canal transport contributed greatly to the development of trade. Though canal transport suffered a setback initially after the introduction of railway, it picked up again and grew by eight times between 1880 and 1930. Transport was an important factor in the development of different regions within the district. For example, late introduction of railway in the Palnad and Vinukonda taluks in the late 1920s was a contributory factor in the relative backwardness of those taluks.

Demographic Profile:

In the Madras Presidency, density of population was highest on the West Coast among all the demographic divisions. West Coast was closely followed by the South comprising of the Tamil districts and then by the East Coast.³⁴ The East Coast division comprised of the Telugu districts of Ganjam, Visakhapatnam, Godavari, Krishna, Guntur and Nellore. Of these, Godavari had the highest density and Nellore the lowest. Guntur's density was higher than Nellore's, but lower than that of any of the others.³⁵ Therefore, there was plenty of room for expansion.

Population increase between 1871 and 1931 was fairly steady in Guntur district except during 1871-81 and 1911-12.

34. 1901 Madras Census (part I), p. 19.

35. 1911 Madras Census (part I), p. 34.

The factor behind the slow growth during 1871-81 was the 1876-78 famine which affected nearly the whole of the Presidency.

Table 2.4: Increase of Population between 1871 and 1881 in Guntur district

| Taluq | Total Population in 1881 | Density (per sq. m.) | % of increase between 1871 and 1881 |
|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Bapatla | 151,736 | 223 | +5.64 |
| Repalle | 184,340 | 286 | +8.49 |
| Guntur | 136,083 | 272 | +7.15 |
| Narasaraopet | 128,791 | 181 | +6.78 |
| Sattenapalle | 110,290 | 154 | +8.42 |
| Palnad | 125,799 | 119 | +4.26 |
| Vinukonda | 66,977 | 101 | +3.83 |

Source: 1881 Madras Census, Vol.I.

Population increase was fairly good in all the taluks except the backward taluks of Palnad and Vinukonda. This increase was also aided by the net immigration of people into the district from its neighbours, especially Nellore, Kurnool and Nizam's dominions.³⁶

The main factor which impeded population growth during 1911-21 was the influenza epidemic of 1918 which practically affected the whole of the Presidency. The district was affected also by cholera during the decade.

36. Kistna Manual (1883), p. 379.

Table 2.5: Population Growth during 1911-21 in Guntur district

| Taluk | Population in 1911 | Population in 1921 | % of Gain or Loss between 1911 and 1921 |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Tenali | 203, 262 | 225, 348 | +10.9 |
| Repalle | 139, 812 | 150, 389 | + 7.6 |
| Bapatla | 241, 999 | 261, 512 | + 8.1 |
| Guntur | 230, 928 | 254, 923 | +10.4 |
| Narasaraopet | 195, 137 | 211, 631 | + 8.5 |
| Sattenapalle | 184, 474 | 188, 310 | + 2.1 |
| Palnad | 161, 197 | 156, 958 | - 2.6 |
| Vinukonda | 94, 469 | 100, 611 | + 6.5 |

Source: Statistical Appendix to the Guntur Gazetteer (1929).

The rate of growth was slower during 1911-21, but none of the taluks except Palnad actually registered a decrease. There was temporary emigration of the poor from Palnad in large numbers to the deltaic parts of the district in search of livelihood. Because of the precarious rainfall and poor soils of the taluk, a certain amount of permanent migration also had taken place from there to the rich delta taluks and Guntur town where they could work as coolies round the year.³⁷

Density of population of the district also was steadily increasing, and by 1931 equalled that of the neighbouring Krishna district. Tenali taluk had the highest density. It

37. Venkateswaran Report, op. cit., p. 26.

Table 2.6: Growth of Population by Taluks in Guntur district

| Taluks | Years | | | | | |
|----------------|---------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 1871 | 1881 | 1901 | 1911 | 1921 | 1931 |
| Guntur | 126,997 | 136,083 | 200,557 | 230,928 | 254,923 | 297,835 |
| Sattenapalle | 101,728 | 110,290 | 159,645 | 184,474 | 188,310 | 215,885 |
| Narasaraopet | 120,619 | 128,791 | 168,547 | 195,137 | 211,631 | 237,261 |
| Palnad | 120,658 | 125,799 | 153,638 | 161,197 | 156,958 | 167,994 |
| Vinukonda | 64,508 | 66,977 | 82,493 | 94,469 | 100,611 | 104,379 |
| Bapatla | 143,629 | 151,736 | 213,456 | 241,999 | 261,512 | 298,869 |
| Tenali | 169,912 | 184,340 | 288,127 | 203,262 | 225,348 | 256,627 |
| Repalle | | | | 139,812 | 150,389 | 178,824 |
| District Total | 848,051 | 904,016 | 1,266,463 | 1,451,278 | 1,549,682 | 1,757,674 |

Source: Various Census Volumes.

was followed by Guntur, Repalle, Bapatla, Narasaraopet, Sattenapalle, Vinukonda and Palnad in that order.³⁸

Demand for Labour and Migration:

Rapid increase in the irrigated area resulted in a great demand for labour in the delta taluks. Demand for labour at certain points of time was excessive because all the ryots by custom transplanted and harvested at about the same time.³⁹

With the increase of prosperity in delta areas, amount of labour contributed by the ryots' families decreased and this was also a factor in the demand for labour. But, during the process of agricultural operations such as transplantation and harvest of paddy, picking of cotton, pulling out and gathering groundnut, pruning and curing of tobacco, reaping of cholam and maize, and picking of chillies, no ryot could avoid employing outside labour. Besides the fact that such operations were commenced by the ryots simultaneously, they also had to be completed in the shortest possible time span owing to the exigencies of the seasons.⁴⁰ According to N.G. Ranga, this also had a

38. Ibid.

39. Paddison Report, op. cit., p. 24.

40. Written Evidence of N.G. Ranga in MPBEC Report, Vol. III - Written Evidence, p. 744.

beneficial impact on the employment condition of the Panchamas of the delta taluks. Ranga observed that previously they were held in bondage by the rich landlords of the area, and had to migrate to whatever place their employers chose to go. Now they were freed from that bondage and also got higher wages.⁴¹

There was movement of population every year from the poorer districts to the irrigated tracts of the deltas. Thousands moved every year from Nellore, Visakhapatnam and the uplands of Godavari, Krishna and Guntur to the irrigated tracts of Krishna and Godavari. Some of them settled down permanently in those tracts.⁴²

Migration within the district also took place on a considerable scale. Apart from the permanent settlers, number of annual visitors from the uplands of Guntur to the delta was enormous. This contributed to the higher increase of population in the delta taluks and a lower increase in the upland taluks.⁴³

41. N.G. Ranga, Economic Organization of Indian Villages, Vol. I - Deltaic Villages (Bezwada, 1926), p.181.

42. Note by G.F. Paddison in Royal Commission on Labour, Evidence, Vol. VII, part I, Madras Presidency and Coorg (London, 1930), p.5.

43. Paddison Report, op. cit., p.5.

Towns:

By 1931, nineteen places in the district were declared as towns. Five of these, Guntur, Tenali, Narasaraopet, Ongole and Chirala were municipal towns. Growth of transport, trade and the increasing demand in towns for casual labour contributed to the rise of towns.⁴⁴

Guntur, besides being the district headquarters, was also the chief centre of cotton, tobacco and groundnut trade. It was also an important railway centre. Its population increased more than three-fold between 1871 and 1931. Narasaraopet grew up as a centre of cotton and groundnut trade. It was the most important railway centre of the uplands after Guntur. Vinukonda was an important town of the uplands in the pre-1870 period. But it was later on bypassed in the transport network of the district and stagnated. Narasaraopet took its place. Chirala, Vetapalem and Mangalagiri were important weaving centres of the district. Since the revival of handloom industry in the 20th century was no way dramatic, it was reflected in the moderate increases in the size of these towns. Tenali grew up phenomenally during our period. Its increase was eight-fold between 1881 and 1931. It became the chief centre for paddy trade in the district.

44. Venkateswaran Report, op. cit., p. 30.

Table 2.7: Growth of Population of Selected
Towns in Guntur District between
1871 and 1931

| Towns | 1871 | 1881 | 1891 | 1901 | 1911 | 1921 | 1931 |
|--------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Guntur | 18,033 | 19,646 | 23,359 | 30,833 | 40,529 | 48,184 | 65,179 |
| Tenali | 4,042 | 4,747 | 6,074 | 10,204 | 18,195 | 23,230 | 34,580 |
| Chirala | 9,256 | 9,061 | 10,581 | 16,264 | 18,618 | 15,323 | 18,853 |
| Vetapalem | 6,355 | 7,324 | 8,502 | 9,547 | 10,562 | 10,288 | 11,102 |
| Mangalagiri | 3,637 | 5,617 | 6,426 | 7,702 | 8,747 | 9,945 | 10,972 |
| Narasaraopet | - | 3,928 | 5,309 | 7,108 | 8,743 | 11,531 | 15,403 |
| Vinukonda | 4,928 | 5,638 | 6,911 | 7,266 | 7,495 | 8,349 | 7,711 |

Source: Census Volumes of Relevant years.

CHAPTER III
COTTON AND RICE MARKETS

I. COTTON:

Cotton Producing Tracts of India:

In India of the 19th century, cotton was mainly cultivated in four principal regions, the Ganga Valley, the Deccan, Western India and Southern India. In the Ganga valley, cotton cultivation was not important in the lower Bengal, but the Doab and Bundelkhand of the Northwestern Provinces produced and exported considerable quantities of cotton. The Deccan or the Central India was the great cotton sector of India. It could be divided into the Nagpur, Hyderabad, Berar and Dharwad districts. The soil in the valleys of Nagpur is a rich black loam. In the hilly portion there is a red clay soil. The cotton of the district known commercially as "Hinganghat Cotton" from the chief town of the sector was very fine and soft and considered to possess the highest qualities of any Indian cotton. Nearly all cotton produced in Deccan was exported and found its market in Bombay. Hyderabad and Berar produced cotton known as the Oomras. Dharwad district was suited to the acclimatization and culture of American cotton.¹

1. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bulletin No. 33, The Cotton Plant, Its History, Botany, Chemistry, Culture, Enemies and Uses (Washington, 1895), pp. 43-44.

Western India was not a heavy producer of cotton except in the provinces of Sind, Kutch and Gujarat. A major disadvantage of the region with regard to cotton cultivation was the extreme heat and drought succeeding low rainfall.

Cotton Cultivation in the Madras Presidency:

In South India, Coimbatore and Tirunelveli were the most important districts in the cultivation of cotton. They were followed by the ceded districts of Kurnool, Bellary, Cuddapah and then by Guntur. Among the various varieties of cotton grown, Cambodia cotton (an American variety) was grown in Coimbatore, Salem, Tiruchinapalli, Madura and Tirunelveli. 'Uppam' was a variety grown in Salem and Coimbatore. 'Tinnevellies' was grown in Madura, Ramnad and Tirunelveli. 'Northerns' and 'Westerns' was grown in the ceded districts. 'Ocanadas' was grown in Krishna and Guntur.²

The area under the cultivation of the industrial crops in the Madras Presidency varied between 12-15% of the total area cultivated. The area under cotton was between 5-8% of the total area.³ In value terms, cotton also became the most important export item of the Presidency. In 1855-56,

2. Statistical Atlas of the Madras Presidency (Madras, 1935), p.5.

3. Statistical Atlas of the Madras Presidency (Madras, 1894), p.8.

cotton exports amounted to 21 million lbs. and increased by the 1890s to 98 million lbs. on an average.⁴

With the increase of cotton trade in the Presidency, cotton markets developed in different places. In the ceded districts, there were three principal markets, Adoni and Bellary in Bellary district and Nandyal in Kurnool district. The main market in Coimbatore was at Tiruppur and in Tirunelveli, several centres like Koilpatti, Sattur, Sivakasi, Virudhunagar developed. In the northern Circars, Guntur and Kanchigacherla were the main markets.⁵

Long staple cotton was produced mainly in Coimbatore and Tirunelveli districts. 'Northerns' and 'Westerns' produced in the ceded districts was basically of short staple. 'Cocanadas' produced in the Northern Circars was a short staple desi cotton. It derived its name from the fact that it was exclusively shipped at the port of Cocanada (Kakinada) before the advent of railways.⁶ 'Cocanada'

-
4. S. Srinivasa Raghavaiyengar, Memorandum on the Progress of the Madras Presidency During the Last Forty Years of British Administration (Madras, 1893), p.68.
 5. Report of the Madras Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee (Madras, 1930), vol.I - Report, p.109.
 6. Indian Cotton Committee (Calcutta, 1920), Evidence (hereafter called ICC Evidence), Vol.V - Commercial, Part II, p.11.

cotton was produced in Guntur, Krishna, Godavari and Ganjam districts and the chief centres of trade were Kakinada, Bezawada (Vijayawada), Guntur, Narasaraopet where cotton was pressed.⁷ 'Cocanadas' of Guntur was also known as 'Red Cocanadas' because of the distinctive colour of this cotton. There was a special demand for this cotton because of its suitability to the application of dyes. The staple of this cotton varied between $1\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{5}{8}$ inch. The staple varied from taluk to taluk. Cotton of the Palnad taluk in the north-west of Guntur produced the strongest staple and the best quality of cotton was produced in this taluk.⁸

Acreage and Cultivation of Cotton in Guntur District:

It was reported in 1863 that more than 1,00,000 acres were under cotton cultivation in the Krishna district (of which Guntur was a part).⁹ Major part of the cotton produced was cultivated in the taluks of Palnad, Vinkonda, Narasaraopet, Guntur and Sattenapalle of the Guntur division.

The cotton produced in the district was partly consumed within the district, but a greater portion of it was transported by land to the northern districts of Godavari

7. Ibid., p. 14.

8. Ibid., p. 13.

9. J.T. Wheeler, Handbook of Cotton in the Madras Presidency (Madras, 1862), p. 219.

Table 3.1: Acreage of Cotton in Guntur in the 19th Century

| Year | No. of Acres |
|---------|--------------|
| 1854-55 | 89,616 |
| 1855-56 | 105,470 |
| 1856-57 | 97,163 |
| 1857-58 | 102,835 |
| 1865-66 | 111,483 |
| 1881-82 | 168,025 |

Source: L.R. Settlement Reports for Guntur, Wilson's Scheme Report on the Settlement of Guntur division of the Kistna District (1868), and Kistna Manual by Mackenzie (1883).

and Visakhapatnam where it was used by the native weavers. A portion of the crop was transported either on bandies (carts) or pack bullocks direct from the villages where it was grown to the northern districts, via Bezwada and Eluru. Another portion of the produce was carried by land to Amaravati, a town on the bank of the river Krishna, twenty miles above Bezwada, from where it was transported by the river to Bezwada and into the Godavari district by the canal and the Kolleru lake.¹⁰ Very little was exported by sea and none was shipped direct to Europe.

10. British House of Commons, Parliamentary Paper No. 132, East India (Cotton), Cotton Cultivation in India & Prospect of Supplies of that Article to England (London, 1863), p.314.

Expansion in the cultivation of cotton appears to have occurred haltingly in Guntur. Acreage under cotton was 89,616 acres in 1854-55. It increased to 105,470 acres in 1855-56 and decreased again to 97,163 acres in 1856-57. It increased in the following year to 102,835 acres.¹¹ By 1865-66, the acreage under cotton in the district had increased only to 1,11,483 acres. It was observed by W. Wilson, Settlement Officer, that in the seven previous years (1858-65), a general advance of 20% in the total cultivated area had resulted in a relative advance of cotton of only 1%.¹² Thus it is clear that the cotton boom in India following the beginning of the American Civil War had not encompassed the Guntur region. The short staple variety of cotton produced in Guntur was not in much demand by the textile industry in England.

But by the 1880s, a substantial increase occurred in the cultivation of cotton in Guntur. In 1881-82, approximately 195,000 acres came under the cultivation of cotton which is nearly double the acreage of the late 1850s and

11. These acreage figures are taken from the Annual Jamabandi Reports of Guntur for the years 1855-56, 1856-57, 1857-58.

12. W. Wilson, Land Revenue Settlement Scheme Report of the Guntur Division of Kistna District (Madras, 1868), pages not numbered in the Report. (hereafter called Wilson Report).

early 1860s.¹³ Guntur town became the major centre now for export and trade in cotton. Cotton went from Guntur to Kakinada, Machilipatnam and Madras from where it was shipped to other places. Four presses were installed in Guntur where raw cotton delivered by the peasants in their carts was pressed into bales and despatched to the above mentioned places. From 1876 to 1882, an annual average of 21,000 bales was despatched from the Guntur presses. It was estimated that this estimate brought the equivalent of £ 100,000 sterling to the Guntur cultivators.¹⁴

Cotton was cultivated mainly as a dry crop in Guntur. Watering of the crop was not practised, and little manuring was done. It relied on favourable rain, an absence of unfavourable wind and freedom from the attacks of insects and other pests. Production costs were low, and because of the good prices of cotton in the market, the profit margin with the cultivators was considerable.¹⁵

Cotton cultivation continued to expand through the turn of the century right upto the end of the First World

13. Gordon Mackenzie, A Manual of the Kistna District in the Presidency of Madras (Madras, 1883), pp.403 and 409.

14. Ibid., p.367.

15. ICC Evidence, Vol.V, Part II, p.12.

Table 3.2: Acreage of Cotton in various Taluks of Guntur District in the Twentieth Century

| Years | Bapatla | | Guntur | | Narasa- raopet | | Sattena- palle | | Palnad | | Venukonda | | Tenali & Repalle | | District Total | |
|---|---------|------|--------|------|-------------------|------|-------------------|-------|--------|-------|-----------|-------|---------------------|------|-------------------|------|
| | Area | % | Area | % | Area | % | Area | % | Area | % | Area | % | Area | % | Area | % |
| 1901-02 | 178 | 0.06 | 14,033 | 5.73 | 6,131 | 2.41 | 34,241 | 13.67 | 57,041 | 19.53 | 7,073 | 5.06 | 67 | 0.02 | 118,764 | 6.53 |
| 1926-27 | 172 | 0.06 | 7,501 | 3.36 | 6,504 | 2.67 | 17,398 | 7.19 | 50,268 | 17.15 | 13,569 | 9.09 | 1 | - | 95,413 | 5.04 |
| 1927-28 | 131 | 0.04 | 5,280 | 2.24 | 5,714 | 2.18 | 14,349 | 5.90 | 41,332 | 14.16 | 16,331 | 9.93 | 1 | - | 83,138 | 4.24 |
| 1928-29 | 102 | 0.03 | 4,045 | 1.65 | 6,400 | 2.47 | 16,044 | 6.56 | 56,586 | 18.91 | 22,159 | 13.44 | 2 | - | 105,338 | 5.33 |
| 1929-30 | 123 | 0.04 | 6,926 | 2.90 | 5,411 | 2.09 | 18,849 | 7.81 | 59,037 | 19.99 | 17,792 | 11.26 | 2 | - | 108,140 | 5.56 |
| 1930-31 | 142 | 0.04 | 3,713 | 1.50 | 4,720 | 1.56 | 10,918 | 4.04 | 46,168 | 14.74 | 18,123 | 9.70 | 21 | - | 83,805 | 3.97 |
| Average for the five years between 1926-27 and 1930-31 | 134 | 0.04 | 5,493 | 2.31 | 5,750 | 2.17 | 15,512 | 6.25 | 50,678 | 16.97 | 17,595 | 10.68 | 5 | - | 95,167 | 4.81 |

Note: Area is in acres, and % refers to the proportion of cotton acreage as a part of the total cultivated area of the taluks.

Source: Second Resettlement Scheme Report of Guntur District by S. Venkateswaran (1936).

War. With the improved transport facilities introduced in the late 19th century, trade in cotton also expanded considerably though it was marked by great fluctuations from year to year.

Cotton Ginning and Pressing;
Evolution of Technology

With the expansion of market for Guntur cotton, methods of ginning also underwent significant changes. In the first half of the 19th century, the foot roller was used for ginning. In this method, cotton was placed on a flat stone and a woman sat on a stool in front of it. She placed the iron roller on the cotton and then rolled it backwards and forwards with her feet, until the wool was fairly separated from the seed and the seed rolled out in front. The same woman also cleaned the cotton with her hands, picking away all the dirt, pieces of leaf, stray seeds, smashed seeds etc. This was a process that took up a lot of time and labour.¹⁶

By the second half of the 19th century, the footroller went out of vogue and gave way to the CHURKHA. This was also a simple instrument, but a step in advance of the footroller. It consisted of two rollers set in a wooden frame, with a small interval between them. The cotton was passed between these rollers and the staple was thus separated from the

16. J.T. Wheeler, op. cit., pp.19-20.

seed. But the wool was turned out in a matted state with the fibres all lying confused in different directions and gave a lot of trouble to English carders. The wool was also mixed up with dirty bits of leaf and seed. Laborious process of hand picking was employed to clean it for home consumption. For purpose of exportation, it was cleaned by heating it with sticks in RATTAN frames.¹⁷

Though machine ginning was introduced around 1890, it took nearly three decades for the new method to become popular with the cotton cultivators. Factor that favoured the popularization of machine-ginning was its efficiency. The whitney gin was much superior to the churkha and the footroller in terms of technical efficiency, speed and outturn. Needs of a growing market favoured machine ginning and it soon displaced hand ginning in a big way. By 1918, three-fourths of cotton was ginned by machines and only one-fourth by hand.¹⁸

Reasons ~~fore~~ the time lag between the introduction of machine ginning and its popularisation were many. The ryot lost about 2% in the weight of cotton if he saw-ginned it instead of cleaning it by churkha. Transportation of cotton with seed from the farm to the ginning factory was expensive,

17. Ibid.

18. ICC Evidence, Vol.V - Part II, p.11.

since kapas was three-fourths heavier than the cotton wool.¹⁹ The seed separated from the wool by the machine was often broken up because of inefficient operation of gins and their indifferent maintenance. When the ginning was done by hand, the seed could be used for sowing purpose in the subsequent season. The new innovations led to the tightening of the control of the cotton broker over the producer and the subordination of the producer to the gin-owner.²⁰

The ginning factories in the district were all owned by natives and in many cases they also functioned as rice factories. The size of the factories was small, each factory possessing twelve to sixteen double roller gins. But, in many cases, the factories were not well-managed. The profits were distributed among the partners to the last penny and no funds were set aside for repairs etc. It usually happened that in a factory of twelve gins, only about six or seven were in working order. There were 36 ginning factories in 1919 running in all 356 double roller gins.²¹

19. S. Bhattacharya, "Cultural and Social Constraints on Technological Innovation & Economic Development: Some Case Studies", The Indian Economic and Social History Review, Vol.III, No.3, September 1966, pp.250-51.

20. Ibid., p.261.

21. ICC Evidence, Vol.V - Part II, pp.12 and 19.

Mackenzie in his Kistna Manual said that there were four presses operating in Guntur at that time pressing an annual average of 21,000 bales a year.²² There was high fluctuation in the number of cotton bales despatched from Guntur to other places annually.

Table 3.3: Particulars of Cotton Despatched from Guntur, 1882-1902 (in bales of 400 lb.)

| Years | Cocanada | Masuli- patam | Bombay | Madras | Total |
|-----------|----------|------------------|--------|---------|---------|
| 1882-83 | 26,802 | - | - | 3,943 | 30,745 |
| 1883-84 | 19,888 | - | - | 2,354 | 22,242 |
| 1884-85 | 22,743 | - | - | 4,629 | 27,102 |
| 1885-86 | 11,247 | - | - | 6,543 | 17,790 |
| 1886-87 | 10,661 | - | - | 6,747 | 17,408 |
| 1887-88 | 19,652 | - | - | 5,396 | 25,048 |
| 1888-89 | 15,329 | 1,995 | - | 2,591 | 19,915 |
| 1889-90 | 29,535 | 8 | - | 1,151 | 30,694 |
| 1890-91 | 29,687 | - | - | 1,925 | 31,612 |
| 1891-92 | 24,362 | - | 3,462 | 1,728 | 29,552 |
| 1892-93 | 19,606 | - | 658 | 9,471 | 29,735 |
| 1893-94 | 21,999 | - | 113 | 6,449 | 28,561 |
| 1894-95 | 15,674 | - | 492 | 3,278 | 19,444 |
| 1895-96 | 20,052 | - | 200 | 9,713 | 29,965 |
| 1896-97 | 23,678 | - | - | 4,113 | 27,791 |
| 1897-98 | 21,124 | - | - | 7,919 | 29,043 |
| 1898-99 | 27,403 | - | - | 5,197 | 32,600 |
| 1899-1900 | 22,006 | - | - | 17,432 | 39,438 |
| 1900-1901 | 4,761 | - | - | 14,625 | 19,386 |
| 1901-1902 | 10,205 | - | - | 18,997½ | 29,202½ |

Source: First Resettlement Scheme Report by G. F. Paddison of Guntur District.

22. Kistna Manual, p. 367.

More presses were installed in later years. In 1918 there were 11 presses in Guntur to press a crop of 60,000 bales at the maximum. The number of presses was far too big for a crop of the above magnitude. If the pressing work was equally divided between the above 11 presses, none of them could get a profitable return on the investment. But, pressing was very unequally divided between different firms, with one of the firms doing about 40% of the total work and the other 60% also unequally shared by the other firms. In such a situation, three of the eleven firms could get no work at all and were virtually closed down. Nominal capital for a cotton press was Rs.60,000 and for the whole industry Rs.650,000. This investment was entirely made by private enterprise and there was no more scope for further investment in the field.²³ Out of the eleven steam cotton presses, two were at Bezwada, seven at Guntur, and two at Narasaraopet. Five of these presses were owned by the natives of the districts, two by Parsis and four by Englishmen.²⁴

'Cocanada' cotton was exported to Madras before the turn of the century. From Kakinada port, it used to be exported to Havre and London. The shipment of 'Cocanadas'

23. Evidence of R.P. Gill before the Indian Industrial Commission, (Calcutta, 1918), Minutes of Evidence, Volume III - Madras and Bangalore, (hereafter called IIC Evidence), p.210.

24. IIC Evidence, pp.210-12.

to Liverpool used to be 2,000 to 3,000 bales on an average. What went to London was probably intended for transshipment to Holland and Belgium. Cocanada cotton was used in Italy for Khaki cloth.²⁵ By 1920, 'Cocanada' cotton was seldom seen in Liverpool. Export of 'Cocanada' cotton to Madras almost ceased by the second decade of the present century, except for a small proportion which went to the Buckingham mills and Pondicherry mills. Most of it was bought by a large number of mill buyers from Bombay.²⁶

Table 3.4: Export of Cotton bales from Guntur and Krishna

| Season from April to March | Krishna | Guntur | | Total |
|-------------------------------|---------|--------|-------------------|--------|
| | Bezwada | Guntur | Narasa- raopet | |
| 1907-08 | - | 64,232 | - | 64,232 |
| 1908-09 | - | 62,899 | - | 62,899 |
| 1909-10 | 5,500 | 51,829 | - | 57,329 |
| 1910-11 | 6,614 | 32,930 | - | 39,544 |
| 1911-12 | 11,000 | 56,068 | - | 67,068 |
| 1912-13 | 13,547 | 69,798 | - | 83,345 |
| 1913-14 | 12,900 | 35,814 | 6,859 | 55,573 |
| 1914-15 | 11,255 | 19,439 | 6,451 | 37,145 |
| 1915-16 | 11,231 | 30,950 | 14,625 | 56,806 |
| 1916-17 | 9,409 | 31,033 | 12,418 | 52,860 |
| Average | 10,182 | 45,499 | 10,089 | 57,680 |

Source: Report of the Indian Cotton Committee,
Vol.V - Part II, p.12.

25. ICC Evidence, Vol.V - Part II, pp.13 and 19.

26. IIC Evidence, p.212.

Marketing of Cotton:

Cotton was bought and finally paid for by firms for (a) export by sea or rail, (b) spinning in local mills. Some of the firms owning spinning mills also exported.

Such firms had local agencies in important cotton centres in charge of an agent, who might be a paid servant, or a broker paid by commission on transactions. Such agent or broker was responsible for the quality of cotton bought. Each local agency possessed a godown for storing cotton and a baling press. Usually, only lint (ginned cotton) was bought by the agents, though sometimes kapas also was bought and ginning charges were charged extra over the price of lint. The chain of middlemen between the firm and the grower consisted of broker, dealers and sub-dealers. Sometimes, the rich ryots sold direct to firms, or, they were dealers or sub-dealers themselves. The broker or dealer made forward contracts with the firms to supply a stated quantity of a cotton of a certain quality by a given date. Usually he also contracted to supply this at a fixed price but on occasions the price was left to be fixed by the prevailing market rate at the time of delivery. He might be financed by the firms or financed himself. He made sub-contracts with sub-dealers and village middlemen who were usually cotton growers themselves. He financed them at times by giving them advances.²⁷

27. ICC Evidence, Vol. II - Agricultural, Part II, p. 161.

In Guntur, firms sent their agents orders for a thousand bales each. The agent found it difficult to buy a thousand bales at a time, and he had to go to two or three people. To be able to fulfil the firm's order, the agent had to enter into a contract with a middleman who took the risk of supplying the order. Export firms in this tract never bought from the producer direct, as they did in Berar and the Central Provinces.²⁸

The producer either sold his cotton (in the case of hand-ginned) to middlemen, dealers in the bazaars, or to small petty village merchants. The ginners were dealers on their own account and sold to the exporters. Guntur and Narasaraopet of the Guntur district and Bezwada of Krishna district were the three cotton markets of the region where all the presses and most of the ginning factories were located. The owners of the outlying ginning factories had their representatives in one of the above three markets.

Nearly the whole of the business done in the district was through forward buying. People sold without having anything for sale. Some of the middlemen who contracted with the export firms were substantial businessmen, but were dependent on the cultivators for supplies. When the

28. ICC Evidence, Vol.V - Part II, p.17.

market was not in their favour and when they were unable to secure requisite supplies from the ryots, the middlemen bought at any rate in the market to fulfil their obligations to the export firms. If they did not, the firms bought on their own account, which meant that the middleman lost even more money. A good quality of cotton could not be secured until the firms bought ready cotton. Supplies secured against forward purchase contracts tended to be of a lower quality and this factor also contributed to an extent to the decline in the demand for 'Cocanada' cotton after 1920.²⁹

Decline of Cotton Cultivation in Guntur:

During 1905-06 cotton production amounted to 75,578 bales. In the succeeding years, it was 51,000 bales and 64,000 bales respectively until it rose to 70,000 bales in 1911-12 and to 80,000 bales in 1912-13. This was the peak and the figure declined in later years and averaged around 60,000 bales.³⁰ From 1910 to 1916, the area sown with Cocanada cotton amounted to about 330,000 acres on an average. In 1916-17, cultivated area steeply declined to 220,000 acres. Acreage showed a steady decline from around this time and dropped to 86,636 acres by 1930-31.

29. Ibid., p. 15.

30. IIC Evidence, p. 212.

Reasons for the decline of the cotton economy in Guntur are many. 'Cocanada' cotton was basically a short staple cotton and the demand for short stapled cotton in the export market declined greatly. Experiments were conducted by the Missionaries to grow 'Cambodia' cotton (a variety of American long-stapled cotton) in Phirangipuram and Kanchigacherla of the tract. The soil being red and unirrigated, the plant was growing poorly and was bearing out not more than 10 bolls, whereas the Red Cocanada plant bore 25-30 bolls and offered the ryot three or four pickings as against two pickings of 'Cambodia' cotton. Another factor in the failure of the latter was that the cattle did not relish its seed which was bigger, softer and not so sweet as the Red Cocanadas.³¹

At the time of the sowings for the 1918 crop, i.e., August and September 1917, cotton price shot up to a level never reached since the American Civil War. It was nearly three times the 1914 level of price of cotton. Such a favourable price also could not induce the farmers to grow more cotton that year.³²

Before the introduction of machine ginning, the ryot hand-ginned his kapas and used the seed for the crop in the following year. When this practice was vogue, good quality

31. ICC Evidence, Vol.V - Part II, p.14.

32. Ibid., p.17.

of cotton was ensured. But with the increase in the number of ginning factories, the ryots approached them for seeds. Because of indifferent maintenance and bad ginning, quality of the seed went down steadily. Previously steps were taken to select special kapas and have it separately ginned and seed distributed among ryots. This worked for some time, but with the fading of interest, ryots resorted to ginning factories again for seed.³³

Forward selling system also worked towards deterioration in the quality of 'Cocanada' cotton. Middlemen had to go to ginners for their deliveries as a last resort, and in most cases were forced to accept what they got. This lowered the quality of cotton.³⁴

The staple of the Red Cocanadas, the best quality of which came from Palnad, was upto an inch at the best. But the average staple was $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ inch. On the average, Red Northernns produced in the ceded districts had a better staple and were relatively less adulterated. They commanded a better price than Cocanadas, and this also was a reason for the relative fall in the demand for Red Cocanadas.

Mixing of different varieties was resorted to in a big way in Guntur, increasingly so with the rise in prices. The

33. Ibid., p.12.

34. Ibid.

good Red Cocanadas were mixed with the white Cocanadas coming from Tuni and Ongole. About 5,000 bales of such very short-stapled cotton from these places was brought to Guntur and Mangalagiri where it was mixed with red kapas. The result was that nearly all the factories of Guntur and Mangalagiri ginned red kapas having an admixture of 5-20% of white kapas.³⁵

Unclean and impure state of Cocanada cotton also made it less desirable in the market. Sometimes this was due to careless picking and ginning. In other cases, this was also due to the fact that certain ryots or dealers deliberately mixed inferior cotton or kapas to get a better weight. Cotton with such an admixture of leaf, dust, kapas was much more difficult and expensive to clean than in the normal case, and so it worked out to be prohibitive to the buyer who had to bear the cost of cleaning.³⁶

The above factors contributed to the decline of cotton in Guntur. On the other hand, prices of groundnut and tobacco were steadily rising, and they relegated cotton to insignificance. It was especially groundnut, also because of the relative simplicity of its cultivation, which became the dominant commercial crop of Guntur uplands during the 1920-30 decade.

35. Ibid., p.14.

36. Ibid., p.18.

II. RICE:

Major producers of rice in the first half of the twentieth century apart from India were Indo-China, Burma, Japan, Jawa and Thailand. Within British India, besides Madras, other important Provinces which produced rice were Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Madras received large rice exports from Burma, Thailand and Indo-China. During 1928-33, rice was grown over 11.4 million acres in the Madras Presidency and this was 29% of the area under cultivation, as against 13.8 million acres of all the millets put together, which was 34% of the cultivated area. Out of this 11.4 million acres under rice, 8.13 million acres (72%) was irrigated and 3.27 million acres (28%) was unirrigated.³⁷

After 1910, increase in the paddy acreage had only been marginal. Output per acre also tended to be stagnant. The major producing areas of the Presidency were the Circars, Nellore and Thanjavur deltas, Madura district and South Canara. These were the paddy surplus areas which exported paddy and rice to other parts of the Presidency as well as some places outside the Presidency.³⁸

37. C.R. Srinivasan, Report on the Rice Production and Trade in the Madras Presidency (Madras, 1934), p.5.

38. Report of the Economic Depression Enquiry Committee in Madras Government, Revenue Department Proceedings, G.O. No. 948, 1 May 1931, p.5.

Table 3.5: Acreage of Paddy in the Madras Presidency
(20th Century)

| Year | Acreage (in million acres) |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| 1902-03 | 7.2 |
| 1908-09 | 10.3 |
| 1912-13 | 10.9 |
| 1915-16 | 11.2 |
| 1920-21 | 11.1 |
| 1924-25 | 10.9 |
| 1929-30 | 11.3 |

Source: Report of the Economic Depression Enquiry Committee, in Madras Government, Revenue Department Proceedings, G.O.No. 948, 1 May, 1931, p.5.

Paddy Cultivation in Guntur District:

Paddy was not a commonly grown and popular crop in the Guntur district even by the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The ryots were not acquainted with wet cultivation except in the southern part of the district. Jonna (Cholam) was the predominantly sown crop and even the rich also ate only Jonna. Rice was eaten only sparingly on occasions like the festivals. The price of rice was high and it was difficult to procure. When Thomas Oakes was the collector of the district (1811-14 and 1916-21), he got some tanks constructed (probably renovated). John Whish who succeeded Oakes as the collector (1821-26) also got some tanks excavated, and so did some of the Jamindars of the district. In years of good rainfall, these improvements in tank irrigation resulted in some increase in the

cultivation of paddy. Ironically, rice became a common item of consumption only during and after the 1832-34 famine when large quantities of paddy and rice were imported into the district.³⁹

Rice or the so-called white paddy requires irrigation essentially for its cultivation. The only type of irrigation available being tank irrigation a method dependent on uncertain rainfall, paddy cultivation was limited in Guntur. According to Wilson's first settlement scheme report, it occupied total area of 65,645 acres in the district in 1865-6. Another variety of rice called black paddy was a standard dry grain for the dry lands. This was a coarse variety of paddy and was much inferior to white paddy. This crop was almost as widely sown as white paddy upto the 1860s. It occupied an area of 55,246 acres in 1865-6 in Guntur. However, with the extension of Krishna irrigation, black paddy became increasingly less sown and became insignificant by 1930s.⁴⁰ The dominant food crops of that time were

39. Goldingham Report in Madras Government, Revenue Department Consultations, April 1841 (Vol.518 at TN Archives, Madras). This discussion is based on the statement of evidence by S. Venkata Krishna Rao, Head Munshi to the Collector of Guntur contained in the Goldingham Report as well as the text of the Goldingham Report itself.

40. S. Venkateswaran, Second Resettlement Scheme Report of Guntur District, in Madras Government, Revenue Department Proceedings, G.O.No.1390 (Confidential), 29 July 1936, p.45.

Jonna which occupied 3,11,597 acres and Varaga which occupied 1,75,922 acres in 1865.6.⁴¹

But the situation started rapidly changing after the irrigation water from the Kistna anicut started becoming available. From an average of 23,820 acres during the three years of 1855-6 to 1857-8, it increased to 65,645 acres by 1865-6 and 2,02,860 acres by 1883.⁴² Causes for the slow expansion of wet paddy cultivation were heavy tax burden on the peasantry, inexperience in the use and application of water, poor transport facilities and low prices of paddy. Tax burden was heavy in the Krishna district as a whole, but it was heavier in the Guntur portion of the district. But by the 1880s, road transport improved, paddy prices started rising from mid-1880s, and a railway line was opened between Madras and Calcutta during 1891-2. These developments greatly aided the expansion of paddy cultivation and led to the creation of large paddy surpluses. Expansion of paddy was rapid upto the end of the 19th century, when it expanded to 291,685 acres by 1902-3. After this date also, there was expansion, but it was at a much slower rate. Annual average of paddy acreage between 1926-27 to 1930-31 amounted to 365,562 acres.

41. Wilson Report, op. cit.

42. Kistna Manual, op. cit.

Table 3.6: Expansion of Paddy Acreage in Guntur district

| Taluks | 1865-66 | 1881-82 | 1888-89 | 1901-02 | 1910-11 | Average of 1913, 1915 and 1916 | Average of 1926 and to 1930 | Average of 1924, 1925, 1928 | 1940 |
|--------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Repalle) | 36,269 | 101,878 | 139,871 | 163,953 | 79,387 | 93,212 | 102,861 | 101,950 | 90,656 |
| Tenali) | | | | | 111,032 | 122,199 | 119,768 | 122,561 | 144,915 |
| Bapatla | 24,370 | 79,000 | 91,151 | 103,339 | 105,908 | 118,767 | 113,551 | 114,171 | 123,258 |
| Guntur | 1,067 | 12,200 | 15,840 | 16,780 | 15,747 | 19,418 | 21,034 | 20,395 | 38,082 |
| Palnad | 1,008 | 1,827 | 3,003 | 1,628 | 2,042 | 3,345 | 2,391 | 2,651 | 1,906 |
| Narasaraopet | 1,818 | 4,255 | 5,243 | 2,899 | 2,505 | 4,811 | 3,055 | 3,700 | 4,380 |
| Sattenpalle | 395 | 1,326 | 1,618 | 1,553 | 1,136 | 1,230 | 1,179 | 1,225 | 2,254 |
| Vinukonda | 718 | 2,374 | 1,850 | 1,533 | 1,407 | 3,125 | 1,721 | 2,166 | 3,451 |
| Total | 65,645 | 202,860 | 258,576 | 291,685 | 319,164 | 366,107 | 365,562 | 368,819 | 408,902 |

Source: Wilson Report, Kistna Manual, various issues of Statistical Atlases of Madras Presidency.

The popular variety of paddy in the delta was 'budda kusuma' which yielded the heaviest grain of paddy and was not so delicate as the other varieties. The other varieties were PEDDA KUSUMA, ATRAGADDA, MOLAKOLUKULU and BANGARATHEEGALU.⁴³ Most of the paddy crop in the delta was cut by the middle of January. Rotation of crops was not practised in the case of paddy fields. After the cutting of the paddy crop in late December/early January, sun hemp seeds were sown in the field in between the rows of paddy crop. This was a three month fodder crop cut in February or March. Sun hemp was preferred for clayey soils. In the sandy and loamy soils of Repalle, horsegram was raised as the fodder crop after the cutting of paddy. A new fodder crop with the local name of PILLIPESARA also became popular in the 20th century.⁴⁴ Double cropping of paddy was not vogue in the district as there was no water supply by the Krishna canals for the second crop. Supplies available in the river were needed for maintaining the necessary levels in the navigation canals, filling the drinking water tanks in the deltaic villages etc. In the uplands of the district, a second crop of paddy was cultivated, but such area was confined to the ayacut of a few tanks which varied from year to year.⁴⁵

43. Venkateswaran Report, op. cit., p.13.

44. Ibid., p. 14.

45. Ibid., p.89.

Marketing of Rice:

In the Northern Circars, large quantities of paddy were stored in specially built granaries called Gadis. The capacities of these Gadis varied from 300 to 1,000 bags. These were generally owned by the producers. Sometimes, these Gadis were also let out to merchants to store their grain.⁴⁶ Such storing facilities were mainly utilised by rich ryots who sold when prices were favourable.

Marketing was a negligible problem for small ryots with two or three acres of land because they had little to sell. Big ryots of the Krishna delta frequently carried their paddy by cart to the market town and sold it directly to the merchants there who often were also rice mill owners. When this happened, there was no hypothecation of the crop and no advance sale.⁴⁷ But many ryots did not sell paddy direct, but sold through a commission agent. Paddy was brought to the commission merchants of the town by the ryots or petty merchants of the villages and stocks sold through the commission merchants to mill owners. The payment was generally made after the paddy reached the commission merchant. Sometimes advances were given by the commission merchants to the village petty merchants who in turn paid a portion of the price of the purchased quantity to the ryots

46. Srinivasan Report, op. cit., pp.61-62.

47. MPBEC Report, Vol.I, p.106.

in the village itself.⁴⁸

In some big centres in the Circars like Guntur, Tenali and Bezwada, produce from the surrounding villages was brought by the cultivators to a common spot called chavadi or Mathsulu every morning. Buyers and brokers collected there and grain was auctioned. Either each consignment was auctioned separately, or the amount realised in auction for the first consignment of a particular variety was taken as the price for that variety for the day.⁴⁹

Preparation of rice for export rather than exporting paddy straight away was the more common practice in the Circars. Profits involved in the processing and bulk reduction by dehusking of paddy were also gained by the merchants and the mill-owners of the towns. Paddy was stored for some time before raw rice could be prepared. People bought paddy at the beginning of the season and stored it for sale later when the price rose. A number of banks and money-lenders usually advanced loans on the security of the stored grain. This facility was mainly utilised by merchants and big ryots.⁵⁰

48. MPBEC Report, Vol.V, p.329.

49. Srinivasan Report, op. cit., p.57.

50. Ibid., pp.62-63.

But such merchants and ryots who took loans on stored grain suffered a great deal during the depression of the 1930s, as there was no price rise subsequent to the stocking of the produce. As a result, capital borrowed in the form of produce loans heavily declined during the period.

The procedure adopted by the banks in giving produce loans was as follows. The banks estimated the total value of the pledged paddy stock at 4-8 annas per bag less than the prevailing market rate, deducted 20% of this value as margin to cover the risks and advanced the balance as loan. The borrower executed a pro-note and gave a declaration that he had stored so many bags of paddy in a particular godown which had been insured, that the stock belonged to him only, and that no one but the bank had any claim on it. If the price of grain fell later in the market below the rate advanced by the bank, the bank called upon the borrower to make up the amount.⁵¹

Resort to produce loans by rice mills also became increasingly prevalent. When paddy came freely to the market and when it suited the mills, they took 'produce loans'. Paddy beyond the immediate requirements was purchased, stored in godowns under the bank's lock and key. The paddy remained under lien until such a time as arrivals

51. Ibid.

at the market were not sufficient to meet mills' requirements. Besides these, 'clean loans' were also provided to the mills. They were granted on pro-notes signed by the managers of the mill supported by a personal guarantee by those who have taken shares in the mill venture.

Before 1906, there were not many rice mills in the coastal districts of Godavari, Krishna and Guntur. After that date, there was a sharp increase in their number. Many of these mills received financial assistance from the Bank of Madras.⁵² The first of the rice mills were copies of large Rangoon mills. The later type had the small oil engine and huller scheme. Due to the difference in the harvest practices, paddy produced in Guntur, Nellore, Godavari etc. was much superior to the Tanjore paddy, and was milled as raw rice and marketed as such. Tanjore paddy was unfit for conversion into raw rice. In the former districts, paddy purchasers were millers themselves and they watched the quality of paddy brought to the mills. They had a practice of testing samples for the percentage of chaff and immature grains in each consignment and reduced the price accordingly.⁵³

52. Evidence of W.B. Hunter of the Bank of Madras before the Indian Industrial Commission, Evidence Vol.III, (Calcutta, 1918), p.278.

53. Srinivasan Report, op. cit., p.13.

Enterprise of the people and their cooperative effort combined with the financial assistance offered by banks was the major impetus to the development of rice mill industry in Guntur district. The method of raising capital to start a rice mill is described below. If the estimated cost of a rice mill was around Rs.60,000 about twelve men came together to raise the capital jointly. Each of the twelve men took up about five shares of Rs.1,000/- each. Some took more shares and some less, it was not required that all of them took an equal number. From amongst themselves, they appointed two managers who preferably held greater shares. If they happened to hold fewer shares, they were expected to increase their interest in the mills by a special deposit, usually of Rs.5,000.⁵⁴ The sharers in the rice mills in the 1900-1910 decade mostly belonged to the Vaisya caste, whereas in the later decade, agriculturists, landowners entered the rice milling industry in a big way.⁵⁵

Rice from the mills was either sent direct by the millers to the merchants in other consuming centres or a big commission agent collected all the indents from the merchants in the surrounding consuming centres and then placed orders for the quantity required of a particular rice as per sample obtained previously. Sometimes early

54. Indian Industrial Commission, Evidence Vol.III, p.277.

55. Ibid., pp.78-79.

in the season, the miller or the merchant in the delta areas sent rice to a commission agent in the other centre for selling the stock at the price fixed by him. Because of the cheap price and a glut in the paddy market, rice was offered at low prices in the consuming markets. Later in the year, merchants at the consuming centre purchased rice on their own account. At this time rice was supplied only on demand.⁵⁶

Trade in Paddy/Rice:

The foreign export trade of the Madras Presidency was carried on primarily in parboiled rice and to a very small extent in paddy with Ceylon, Federated Malay States and Strait Settlements. Tanjore, Godavari and Krishna were the districts involved in this trade. Madras Presidency supplied only special classes of rice to the above places. When it came to coarse rice, it could not compete with countries like Burma, Thailand or Indo-China. Within India, Madras Presidency exported to Mysore, Hyderabad, Bombay-Deccan and to a small extent to Trivandrum, Cochin, Pudukkottai, Pondicherry and Goa.⁵⁷

Exports from the Northern Circars mostly met the requirements of the Hyderabad state. Bezwada occupied a

56. Srinivasan Report, op. cit., p.57.

57. Ibid., p.21.

key position in the delta and monopolised 60% of the export trade to Hyderabad.⁵⁸

Within the Madras Province, inter-district movement of paddy took place mostly by railway and to some extent by waterways wherever available. In Godavari and Krishna deltas, country craft in canals was the main source of paddy transport. Small cargo boats carried rice from Krishna delta and Nellore to the Madras city through the Buckingham canal.⁵⁹ Movements within each district were mainly carried on with country carts, and in the 1930s the motor lorries were slowly ^{coming} into use.⁶⁰

Table 3.7: Statement of the total arrivals and despatches of rice and paddy in thousands of maunds into and from selected districts in the presidency by rail and canal only for 1933-34.

| District | Paddy (Thousand maunds) | | Rice (thousand maunds) | |
|---------------|-------------------------|----------|------------------------|----------|
| | Arrival | Despatch | Arrival | Despatch |
| East Godavari | 132 | 230 | 327 | 737 |
| West Godavari | 253 | 1,189 | 42 | 2,760 |
| Krishna | 1,051 | 54 | 213 | 2,950 |
| Guntur | 10 | 6 | 520 | 736 |
| Nellore | 3 | 54 | 179 | 856 |

Source: C.R. Srinivasan, Report of the Rice Production and Trade in the Madras Presidency (Madras, 1934), p. 36.

58. Ibid., p. 22.

59. Ibid., p. 68.

60. Ibid., p. 35.

The districts that had an appreciable surplus available for export were Godavari (East and West), Krishna, Guntur, Nellore and Tanjore. But the Presidency as a whole suffered a deficit of rice and imported large quantities from outside. The paddy-surplus areas of the Presidency had the disadvantage of being situated away from the districts like Salem, Malabar, Coimbatore and Nilgiris which had a big demand. Cost of transport over long distances was high and the price offered by the millers to the growers had to be reduced for this rice to compete with imported rice.

The delta taluks of Guntur, Tenali, Repalle and Bapatla grew Kusuma, a coarse variety on a large scale. The whole of the surplus paddy was converted into raw rice. The surplus rice of the delta taluks also met the nearer demand of the dry taluks of the district and that of the Kavali taluk of the Nellore district. In the South, Coimbatore and Tiruppur got a portion of their raw rice requirements from the Guntur district. A certain portion of the needs of Cuddapah, Chittoor, Bellary, Anantapur, Kurnool, Hyderabad and Bangalore was also being met by this district.⁵¹

Krishna and Godavari deltas also exported rice to many places in the Bombay Presidency. Miraj, Hubli, Gadag, Sangli, Katgeri, Bijapur, Bagalkot, Sholapur, Shedbal, Kudchi were

61. Ibid., pp.40-41.

some of the chief centres of import into the Bombay Presidency. In 1930-31 Godavari, Krishna and Guntur districts alone exported 18,000 tons to Bombay Presidency. It was estimated that a third of this quantity was sent from the Tenali and Repalle markets.⁶²

Investment of Agricultural Surpluses
in Paddy Producing Areas:

N.G. Ranga published in 1926 a survey of seven deltaic villages of the Bapatla and Tenali taluks which mainly produced paddy. This study portrays the conditions of the paddy economy in the delta tract of the Guntur district in a detailed manner.⁶³

KAMMAS of these villages were the main landowning group. PANCHAMAS, VADES, UPPARAS, Muhammadans and other lower caste people were all chiefly wage-earners, though a few had one or two acres of land each. The average land-owning family of one of these villages owned approximately three acres of wet land each.

The nature of paddy cultivation made many of the ryots lazy and lethargic. With irrigation water available, the paddy yield was good and consequently the peasants enjoyed

62. Ibid., p. 24.

63. N.G. Ranga, Economic Organization of Indian Villages, Vol. I - Deltaic Villages (Bezwada, 1926). The subsequent discussion is based on this book.

reasonably good incomes. It did not require them to work very hard, like the peasants working on dry lands did. Moreover, the nature of work on paddy fields was of a seasonal character. They worked for three to four months a year, and for the rest of the year they were virtually free.

Most of the land of Gunter delta was brought under cultivation by the 1920s. Because of the status associated with landownership, many of the rich KAMMA ryots bought the already occupied land at exorbitant prices. As the fertility of such purchased land did not alter, such investment turned out to be unprofitable and unproductive. Some KAMMAS took up gardening as a serious form of rural economic activity by planting mango, lemon etc. trees on a commercial scale.

Because of the high profits involved, money-lending was practised by rich ryots. They lent at high rates of interest to needy ryots and poverty ridden PANCHAMAS. But, due to the inability of the smaller ryots to clear off heavy debt and the incidence of heavy expenditure by them, the money lending ryots had increasingly to resort to the civil courts for the recovery of loans. Such difficulties involved made the rich ryots somewhat reluctant to lend to every one who asked. Such reluctance facilitated the entry of Marwaris into the field of rural money-lending. They lent to any ryot who was willing to pay 18% or a higher rate of compound interest and mortgage his property to them. Increasing

number of people started borrowing from the Marwaris.

Apart from the groups mentioned above, other groups which supplied capital to the ryots were the VAISYAS of the various towns, merchants of the towns, inamdars and absentee land holders who leased out their lands and cooperative societies.

Some enterprising peasants (owning 10-20 acres of land), anxious to do some business or the other, took to dealing in paddy and found it quite profitable. They got trained in this business by becoming partners in the business of collecting the village dues by measuring people's paddy. Sometimes they carted the paddy they bought on commission to the rice mill and earned the wages for carting.

Several kamma ryots of the Guntur delta made attempts to start some business or other. Initially, they were not successful because of their inexperience in that field. Some of the kammas tried to start rice mills in their villages, but lost heavily. These ryots hadn't yet realised the opportunities of more remunerative investments in towns and cities.

When the 1930s depression came, there was not much attention in the acreage under paddy cultivation, because the ryots had no alternative. Price fluctuations in the case of the non-food crops like groundnut and cotton were even more violent, making their cultivation only more risky.

The export market for the rice of the Krishna delta also shrunk over the years due to the massive pumping of Burmese rice in all those markets. Wages did not fall in similar rapidity as prices, therefore farm labourers were not as seriously affected. Cost of cultivation generally remaining at a constant level, peasantry suffered greatly because of the low prices of produce and high rates of interest on the funds they required to borrow.

CHAPTER IV

HANDLOOM ECONOMY AND TRADE

This chapter is divided into six parts. Part I deals with the progress of the handloom industry in terms of the number of looms, number of weavers employed and the population dependent on weaving. It also assesses the impact of the World War I and the world depression starting from 1929. Part II deals with the urbanization of handlooms, while Part III deals with technology. We discuss the competition between the handlooms and the mills in Part IV, and the organization of the industry in Part V. In the last part, we have a brief survey of the living conditions of weavers.

Introduction

The handloom industry of South India generally prospered during the medieval period, especially from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries which was a period of Vijayanagar domination. Trade increased and urbanization took place in this period under the royal patronage of Golconda and Vijayanagar kingdoms.¹ The first decades of the nineteenth century saw ~~keen~~ commercial competition between the various European trading companies, viz., the

¹ Vijaya Ramaswamy, Textiles and Weavers in Medieval South India (Oxford, Delhi, 1985), p. 167.

Portugese, the Dutch, the English and also the indigenous Chettis. At that time, the weavers were in a strong bargaining position and their products were bought up eagerly. By the end of the seventeenth century, the English company edged out its European rivals and moved towards a commercial monopoly over the market.²

When the English company started its 'factories', it found the handloom weaving in many parts of the Province centred in towns. Weavers started working on a system of advances provided by the company's middlemen, and in the process lost their independence. Protectionist interests in England succeeded by the end of the seventeenth century in passing the first of the prohibitory laws against the import of Indian calicoes.³ With this began the story of the decline of handloom industry in Madras. The situation only worsened in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. The impact of the invention of spinning jenny in the eighteenth century in England could be seen in the flooding of the markets in India by Manchester and Lancashire goods. The introduction of chemical dyes, competition with mill cloth dealt a severe blow to the handloom industry. Hand spinning as a distinct occupation started disappearing. Only spinning of fine thread for cloths of superior texture which could not be machine spun and of

2 Ibid., p. 166.

3 Ibid., p. 167.

coarse thread for the coarse thick cloth woven for use by the poor remained. The demand for expensive clothing of superior texture worn by the rich fell, not so much due to Manchester competition in the manufacture of that class of cloth as due to changes in fashion. English broad cloth started displacing the superior handloom cloth natively produced. In the towns, Turbans started going out of fashion among men. Shirts and hosiery goods came in the place of Angavastrams. Increased use of drill shorts both among men and boys reduced the demand for Dhotis.⁴ In the early 1860s, the Lancashire cloth began to be imported in large quantities, and because of its price advantage and fineness of quality, it drove the handloom cloth out of the market. Frequently recurrent famines of the nineteenth century also led to a deterioration of weavers' economic condition.⁵

Handlooms which previously produced silk and cotton cloth, satins, muslins and gold lace etc., were showing definite signs of decay. There were two classes in Dhotis. The first was a plain Dhoti with a narrow border of coloured cotton, and the second a superior Dhoti of fine texture with broad silk borders embroidered with different patterns.

4 Report of the Fact Finding Committee (Handlooms and Mills) (hereafter referred to as FFC Report) chairman P.J. Thomas, (Government of India, New Delhi, 1942)

5 B.M. Bhatia, Famines in India - A Study in Some Aspects of the Economic History of India (1860-1945) (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1963), p. 10.

The first type of Dhoti was worn by the poorer classes. But it had now been superceded by English mill made coarse Dhotis or English long cloth which were much cheaper. The second type of Dhoti was still being manufactured but people now used it only for ceremonial occasions. English millmade finer Dhotis because of their cheapness were driving the finer varieties of handloom Dhotis out of the market.⁶

Saris were still woven on a large scale. But cheap sarees were giving place to English and French printed cottons. European manufacturers could not yet produce anything that could compete with the fine handloom saris produced in the Madras Presidency. But the characteristic beauty of these handloom saris was spoilt by the use of yarn dyed with chemical dyes. The indigenous vegetable dyes which produced sober colours were now fast disappearing and hundreds of dyers lost their occupation. The much renowned ARNI muslins and Dhavani turbans made of fine handspun yarn had become extinct. Most of the yarn used for male as well as female cloth of finer quality was now European. As a result the handspinning industry practically died out.⁷

6 B.S. Baliga, Compendium on the History of the Handloom Industry in Madras (Government of Madras, Madras, 1960) p. 3.

7 Ibid.

I

Progress of the Industry

The two tables given below tell us that the Madras presidency occupied a crucial place amongst the various provinces in India with regard to the handloom industry. Both in terms of the quantity of handloom production and the value of handloom cloth, Madras occupied the foremost position, especially in cotton weaving.

TABLE 4.1

Total Production of Handwoven Cloth per annum
(1942)
(in million yards)

| Province | Cotton including handspun | Silk | Artificial silk | Wool | Mixtures |
|------------|---------------------------|--------|-----------------|-------|----------|
| Bengal | 148.206 | 1.000 | - | - | - |
| Bombay | 174.236 | - | - | 2.660 | 12.744 |
| CP & Berar | 103.173 | 2.251 | 0.144 | 0.772 | 1.145 |
| Madras | 407.027 | 8.284 | 7.208 | 0.131 | 28.764 |
| Punjab | 228.000 | 6.810 | 16.750 | 6.540 | - |
| U.P. | 255.126 | 16.019 | 42.776 | 3.787 | - |

Source : FFC Report, p. 60.

TABLE 4.2

Estimated Value of Handwoven Cloth per annum
(in lakhs of Rupees) in 1942

| Province | Cotton | Silk | Artificial Silk | Wool | Mixtures | Total |
|------------|---------|--------|--------------------|-------|----------|---------|
| Bengal | 511.00 | 60.00 | - | 0.50 | - | 571.50 |
| Bombay | 356.53 | - | 229.30 | 30.00 | 143.37 | 759.20 |
| CP & Berar | 259.55 | 14.92 | .02 | 5.15 | 13.10 | 292.74 |
| Madras | 1411.07 | 139.57 | 54.79 | 1.09 | 136.24 | 1742.76 |
| Punjab | 598.11 | 82.35 | 62.30 | 96.20 | - | 838.96 |
| U.P. | 367.80 | 926.96 | - | 94.64 | - | 1389.40 |

Source : FFC Report, p. 61.

Number of Weavers

In the Madras Presidency, there was a pronounced decline from 1871 in the number of workers in the cotton textile industries as a whole (handlooms as well as mills). But population dependent on weaving (workers as well as dependents) shows a slight increase or at least remains stationary (Table 4.3).

Because of lack of uniformity in the employment of definitions and methods in various censuses, the figures are not exactly comparable. Therefore, definite inferences are not possible. It is probable that the number of men workers practically remained stationary. Number of women

TABLE 4.3

Population Supported by Cotton Weavers
in Madras Presidency

| Year | Actual Workers | | Total Supported |
|------|----------------|---------|-----------------|
| | Men | Women | |
| 1881 | 384,767 | 451,174 | Not stated |
| 1891 | Not stated | | 1,090,685 |
| 1901 | 384,546 | 163,739 | 1,067,589 |
| 1911 | 386,598 | 194,350 | 1,118,628 |
| 1921 | 277,711 | 115,740 | 822,571 |
| 1931 | 334,407 | 83,131 | Not stated |

Source : K.S. Venkataraman, The Handloom Industry in South India (University of Madras, Madras, 1940), p. 54.

workers declined.

On an all-India scale, the number of small scale producers in cotton spinning and weaving declined from 2.4 million in 1911 to 2.2 million in 1951, whereas the handloom worked output increased from 965 million yards in 1902-03/1912-13 to 1068 million yards in 1930-31/1937-38.⁸ In the Madras province too, market for handlooms expanded because of the growth of population and the increased pros-

⁸ Chapter on 'The Occupational Structure' by J. Krishnamurti, in Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol. II (edited by Dharma Kumar) (Orient Longman, Delhi, 1984). p. 540

perity of certain sections of the population, in addition to the quadrupling of the volume of handloom exports between late 1880s and late 1920s.⁹ Stagnation of population against this background indicates the increased productivity of weavers made possible by the use of mill yarn and the new fly-shuttle looms.¹⁰ Expansion of handloom market, though considerable, was not to such an extent that the number of weavers could increase even with new technology.

There was a large increase in the imports of foreign yarn which was mostly of counts higher than those spun in the Indian mills. In the three years 1900-03 handlooms consumed 171,935,000 lb. of yarn. In the three years from 1907-10, the quantity consumed was 179,572,000 lb., an increase of 4.5 per cent. Population increased during the same period by 8.3 per cent. This taken by itself indicates a regression of the industry. But, between 1900-03 and 1907-10, the increase in the imported yarns consumed in the presidency amounted to 52 per cent. The substitution of fine yarn for coarse meant much extra work for the weavers and a proportionate increase in the value of their outturn.¹¹

9 C.J. Baker, An Indian Rural Economy, 1880-1955, The Tamilnad Countryside (Oxford, Delhi, 1984), p. 394.

10 J. Krishna Murti (in CEHI, Vol. II), op.cit.

11 1911 Madras Census, Part I, p. 207.

Number of Looms

Number of looms in the Madras presidency at different points of time is not possible to establish with any certainty. To give an example, number of looms in 1871 was estimated by the Board of Revenue at 280,000 whereas the census estimate was 386,561. There is such a wide divergence between different estimates.

TABLE 4.4

No. of Looms in the Madras Presidency in
Different Years

| Year | 1871 | 1889 | 1900 | 1921 | 1931 | 1940 |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| No. of looms | 280,000 | 300,009 | 167,806 | 169,403 | 334,407 | 340,451 |

Source: FFC Report, p. 6. Figures for 1871, 1889 are the Board of Revenue estimates, 1900, 1921 and 1931 are the Census estimates and 1940 is the FFC estimate.

TABLE 4.5

No. of Looms in Various Provinces in 1921,
1932 and 1940

| Province | 1921 (Census) | 1932 (Tariff Board) | 1940 |
|-----------|------------------|---------------------------|---------|
| Bengal | 213,886 | 200,000 | 142,461 |
| Bombay | - | 100,000 | 117,100 |
| Madras | 169,403 | 225,000 | 340,451 |
| Punjab | 270,507 | 140,000 | 284,205 |
| Assam | 421,367 | 425,000 | 421,022 |
| U.P. | - | 75,000 | 244,252 |
| Hyderabad | 115,434 | 140,000 | 114,500 |

Source : FFC Report, pp. 27-28.

Seventy-two per cent of all looms in India were weaving cotton in 1940, whereas in the Madras presidency, a much higher figure of 82 per cent of all looms were engaged in cotton weaving.

TABLE 4.6

Percent of Looms Engaged in Weaving Different Materials in 1942

| | Cotton | Wool | Silk | Artificial Silk | Others |
|--------|--------|------|------|--------------------|--------|
| India | 72 | 5 | 16 | 1 | 6 |
| Madras | 82 | - | 6 | 2 | 10 |

Source : FFC Report, p. 30.

The Case of Guntur District

Figures given in Table 4.7 are not accurate, but they indicate in a rough way the relative importance of hand-looms in various districts of the presidency

TABLE 4.7

No. of Looms in Various Districts of the Presidency

| District (1) | 1900 (2) | 1921 (3) | 1942 (4) |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Chingleput | 11,255 | 10,600 | 16,600 |
| Salem | 16,341 | 10,841 | 36,540 |
| Coimbatore | 15,040 | 7,714 | 23,415 |
| Tinnevelley | 10,196 | 11,394 | 17,013 |
| Cuddapah | 11,505 | 6,251 | 11,898 |
| Bellary | 9,284 | 5,102 | 13,500 |
| Ganjam | 10,320 | 5,582 | - |
| Krishna) | 12,203 | 6,349 | 5,892 |
| Guntur) | | 14,974 | 20,002 |

Source: Col. 2 - 1911 Madras Census
 Col. 3 - 1921 Madras Census
 Col. 4 - FFC Report.

TABLE 4.8

No. of Loom in Some Important Weaving Centres
of Guntur District, in 1940

| Centre | Number |
|---------------|--------|
| Chirala | 1300 |
| Perala | 1200 |
| Vetapalem | 1000 |
| Pandil\apalli | 510 |
| Mangalagiri | 2000 |

Source: FFC Report, p. 308

Impact of World War I and the World Depression

Handloom sector was handicapped by the uncertainty and unsteadiness of the supply of yarn in abnormal times. During the war imports experienced a steep decline and with the increase in the internal demand for cloth, Indian mills used up much more of their yarn themselves and left much less for the handlooms. The scarcity and high prices of yarn led large numbers of weavers to take up contract work under Mahajans or work as labourers in the Karkhanas. The estimated production of handloom cloth fell from 1088 million yards in 1914-15 to 598 and 741 million yards in 1916-17 and 1917-18 and further to 506 million yards in 1919-20.¹²

The scarcity and dearness of chemical dyes also

12 FFC Report, pp. 9-10.

affected the handloom industry during the First World War. In 1912-13, dye-stuffs of the value of £ 110,429 were imported into Madras. The supply was cut off after the beginning of the war and what remained in the market shot up to high prices.¹³

In the years following the First World War, handlooms were able to obtain yarn more easily. It continued like before to maintain its market in women's garments. Taking advantage of the cheap and brilliant dyes imported from Germany since 1922, several centres in the Madras Province took to the production of elegant multi-coloured saris which the younger women preferred.¹⁴

Handloom industry experienced growth upto 1928-29. All indices like the number of weavers, population dependent on weaving, imports and exports of yarn from Madras, estimates of yarn consumption by the handlooms, number of looms and so on point the progress of the industry.¹⁵

With the onset of the Depression, demand for cloth also suffered like the demand for other commodities. Call for the boycott of the foreign yarns by the national movement also threw a number of weavers who were weaving finer counts out of work. They were not able to procure finer

13 B.S. Baliga, op.cit., p. 15.

14 FFC Report, p. 10.

15 1931 Madras Census, Part I, pp. 227-228.

yarn from the Indian mills.¹⁶ In many centres, the Sowcars withheld their advances to the weavers. Weaving community probably suffered more than any other by the trade slump and by the political activities.¹⁷

II

Urbanization of Handlooms

When the old handweaving industry dependent on hand made yarn succumbed before the onslaught of the foreign mill competition, a new handweaving industry which no longer depended on the uncertain supplies of rough hand spun yarn arose. This new industry used mill spun yarn which could be had in ample quantities and in suitable qualities as regards twist, strength and fineness. The price of this mill yarn was also more reasonable.

The handlooms were initially solely dependent on the imports of yarn from Manchester. As the yarn production in the Indian mills grew, handlooms came to depend more and more on the Indian mill made yarn. Those of the yarn imports that continued were of the higher counts.

Dependence on mill-made yarn necessitated a change in the status of weavers and the organization of the industry as a whole. The daily yarn supply of the weaver came

16 Report of the Economic Depression Enquiry Committee, Chairman H.A.B. Vernon in Revenue Department Proceedings of the Madras Government, G.O. No. 948, 1 May, 1931, p. 14.

17 Ibid., p. 5.

until then from his own household or his immediate neighbourhood when yarn started coming from a distance and had to be bought, yarn dealers and financiers became necessary. Since the average weaver did not have enough credit, the industry fell more and more into the grip of middlemen. In this way a majority of the weavers lost their independence. Most of them started working for a mahajan either on contract or on wage basis.¹⁸

When the handloom industry started manufacturing goods for the external markets outside India and distant markets within the country, sale of the finished product became a specialised job. Merchant financiers slowly found their way into the industry. Weavers also found the financial help from such agents advantageous and moved to urban centres where such advantages could be enjoyed. In the urban environment, weavers did not have any land they could cultivate. They became thus solely dependent on weaving for their livelihood.¹⁹

TABLE 4.9

Proportions of handloom production sold in different markets as percentages of total (1942)

| Province | Home use | Sale in the Indian market % | Export % |
|--------------|----------|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| C.P. & Berar | 3 | 97 | Nil |
| Madras | 5-10 | 80-90 | 5-10 |
| Punjab | 50 | 35 | 15 |
| UP | 1 | 94 | 5 |
| Bihar | 5 | 95 | Nil |

Source : FFC Report, p. 135.

18 FFC Report, p. 6.

19 B.V. Narayanaswami Naidu, Report of the Court of En-

As a result of the advances in the technology of handloom weaving, weaving became a specialised calling of a distinct group of workers. It also ceased to be a partial occupation of agriculturists or a domestic industry mainly practised by women.

TABLE 4.10

No. of full-time and part-time weavers in various provinces (1942)

| Province | Weavers (full-time) | Weavers (part-time) | Total number |
|----------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Assam | 2,800 (1%) | 418,200 (99%) | 421,000 |
| Bengal | 151,484 (75%) | 50,495 (25%) | 201,979 |
| Bihar | 82,924 (81%) | 19,769 (19%) | 102,693 |
| Bombay | 103,300 (88%) | 13,800 (12%) | 117,100 |
| Madras | 369,617 (87%) | 58,099 (13%) | 427,716 |
| Punjab | 288,499 (81%) | 67,355 (19%) | 355,854 |
| U.P. | 181,573 (75%) | 63,139 (25%) | 244,712 |

Source : FFC Report, p. 35.

As a result of such tendencies operating since the 1850s, handweavers moved to towns, especially to such urban centres where the production was for distant markets. Amongst such weavers in South India were weavers from the communities such as Sourashtras, Devangas and Sales.

When a large weaving population congregated in a town, the need for many subsidiary trades arose which depended on handloom weaving. Trades such as dyeing, bleach-

Cont'd.. f.n. 19

quiry into Labour Conditions in the Handloom Industry,
(Government of Madras. Madras. 1948). p. 6.

ing and finishing, gold and silver thread making and embroidery. Various minor trades connected with the upkeep of the loom such as the making of reeds, country shuttles, looms etc., also came up. All these trades together gave employment to a large number of people.²⁰

III

Technology

Throw shuttle looms were used universally by the Madras weavers in the nineteenth century. Experiments in weaving were begun in 1901-02 and some fly-shuttle looms were set up in the School of Arts by the Madras government. Certain methods of sizing were also tried. For the first time an attempt was made to produce native cloths on fly-shuttle looms. Madras Handkerchiefs, saris and dhotis were produced. In 1906 the Salem weaving factory was established and these experiments were continued on a commercial scale. It was demonstrated in 1908 that the English fly-shuttle loom with necessary modifications was suitable to the local conditions and could be advantageously adopted by the weavers.

Alfred Chatterton, then Director of Industries of the Madras government, took a lot of interest in the popularization of the fly-shuttle looms. P. Thyagaraya Chettiar, leader of the weavers community in Madras also played a significant role in the successful demonstration of fly-shuttle. A touring party consisting of a superintendent

and some weavers was sent to the southern districts of the presidency in 1913, and another such party sent to the northern Circars in 1914. These parties popularised fly-shuttles, warping machines, jacquards and dobbies.²¹

Introduction of the fly-shuttle looms marked the beginning of a new epoch in the history of handloom industry in the Madras province. This factor also contributed in a crucial way to the revival of handlooms in the province, and made them withstand in a better way the competition from the imported and Indian mill cloth. The output of each loom increased on an average by not less than 50 per cent after the substitution of throw-shuttle loom by the fly-shuttle loom. The output of the fly-shuttle loom relative to the country loom was nearly double in the case of coarse counts, more than 50 per cent greater with medium counts and less than 25 per cent greater with finer counts ranging from 80 to 150s. The new loom also reduced the unit cost of production. This new device caught on much faster and in a much bigger way in the Madras province than the other provinces. And within the Madras province the transformation occurred on a big scale in the northern Circars.²²

An enquiry held in 1911 established that nearly 10000 fly-shuttle looms were in use in the coastal districts

21 N.G. Ranga, Economics of Handlooms (Bombay, 1930) pp. 260-26

22 1911 Madras Census (Part I), p. 208.

to the north of Madras. Within the Guntur district, the new loom was first introduced at the Vetapalem weaving school, and became popular soon afterwards.²³

But the progress of the adoption of the new loom was not even. There was some backsliding to the throw-shuttle looms between 1911 and 1921 because the sowcars who financed the industry found it difficult to market the increased output of the looms and to keep the coolie weavers supplied with yarn.²⁴ Another factor which retarded their popularization was their unsuitability to the weaving of high quality fabrics.²⁵ Despite these obstacles fly-shuttle looms made most headway in Madras. In 1940, it was estimated that they formed 81 per cent of the total looms in the Madras province, whereas their proportion in the other provinces was much lower.

TABLE 4.11

Different Types of Looms in Various Provinces (1942)

| Province | Throw-Shuttle looms | % of total including other looms | Fly/Shuttle looms | % of total including other looms | Total (2)+(4) | Total including other looms |
|----------|---------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Assam | 410,000 | 97 | 11,000 | 3 | 421,000 | 421,022 |
| Bengal | 45,102 | 32 | 95,759 | 67 | 140,861 | 142,461 |
| Bihar | 64,147 | 62 | 38,915 | 38 | 103,062 | 103,096 |
| Bombay | 45,000 | 37 | 66,860 | 55 | 111,860 | 117,100 |
| Madras | 63,860 | 19 | 275,655 | 81 | 339,515 | 340,451 |
| Punjab | 270,862 | 95 | 13,233 | 5 | 284,095 | 284,205 |

Source : FFC Report, p. 32.

23 Alfred Chatterton, Industrial Evolution in India, (Madras, n.d.), p. 231.

24 1921 Madras Census (Part I), p. 196.

25 FFC Report, p. 33.

TABLE 4.12

Estimates of Production of Handloom Cotton Cloth
on the Basis of No. of Handlooms and Average (1942)

| Province | Throw-Shuttle | Fly-Shuttle | Others | Output per Handloom |
|----------|---------------|-------------|--------|--|
| | | | | Total production of handloom cloth (in million yds.) |
| Assam | 200,000 | 8,000 | 22 | 31.6 |
| Bengal | 28,766 | 60,850 | 1,088 | 154.1 |
| Bihar | 57,828 | 34,528 | 34 | 54.7 |
| Bombay | 34,650 | 45,153 | 915 | 116.0 |
| Madras | 44,830 | 223,880 | 596 | 446.3 |
| C.P. | 30,926 | 31,990 | 350 | 79.6 |
| Runjab | 192,482 | 3,427 | 30 | 175.6 |
| U.P. | 91,269 | 37,268 | - | 145.2 |

Source : FFC Report, p. 59.

Besides the fly-shuttle loom, some other new techniques also were experimented. Attempts were made to introduce some sort of a warping mill in places where the fly-shuttle had been adopted, dobbies for weaving simple designs, jacquard for complicated patterns.²⁶ Hand-driven winding, warping and sizing machines were sought to be introduced. The dyeing party demonstrated aerograph printing and improved methods of dyeing in a number of centres.²⁷

The warping mill cheapened warping by more than half. Dobbies made it easier to weave 'Petu' bordered cloths. The

²⁶ B.S. Baliga, op.cit., p. 13.

²⁷ 1931 Madras Census, (Part I), p. 218.

introduction of jacquard looms facilitated the manufacture of Petu bordered cloths with very complex designs without the help of a boy or girl to lift dobbie.²⁸ Machine made warps considerably lowered the costs of manufacturing. Sizing machine also held a great promise.

TABLE 4.13

Spread of New Techniques in Guntur District

| | |
|---|------|
| Throw-Shuttle loom | 1 |
| Fly-shuttle looms | 4282 |
| Total Number of looms | 4283 |
| Dobbies | 202 |
| No. of looms working with drawboy harness | 1242 |
| No. of Vertical warping mills | 3 |
| No. of Horizontal warping mills | 78 |
| No. of looms fitted with weavers beams | 740 |

Source : Development Department, (Misc. Series), Madras Government, G.O. 2058 of 21 August 1939, p. 14.

Dyeing

In the old handweaving industry, dyeing was largely the hereditary and exclusive occupation of certain classes of people. The art of dyeing required a thorough knowledge of the several vegetable dyestuffs and the proportions in which they had to be mixed to yield different shades. With the introduction of cheap synthetic and coal tar dyes which

28 N.G. Ranga, op.cit., p. 263.

could be mixed easily under the instructions supplied by the manufacturer, dyeing became a common place art.²⁹ As a result traditional dyers were forced to leave their occupation and take to agriculture. This was particularly noticeable in the coastal villages ^{near} Chirala, Vetapalem, Pandillapalli of Bapatla taluk in Guntur district.³⁰

Most of the synthetic dyes were imported. With the beginning of the World War I, supplies of synthetic became increasingly difficult to obtain. But little use could be made of indigenous vegetable dyes other than indigo because many of the plants had gone out of cultivation.³¹

Population supported by dyeing, bleaching, printing, preparation and sponging of textiles in the Madras Presidency is given below. 1911 figure is suspected to be an underestimate. Sharp decrease in the 1931 figure is partly due to the ongoing trade depression when the census was taken.

TABLE 4.14

Population Supported by Dyeing etc.

| Census year | No. of people |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1901 | 23,061 |
| 1911 | 17,096 |
| 1921 | 28,612 |
| 1931 | 10,052 |

Source : 1931 Madras Census (Part I), p. 229.

29 1931 Madras Census (Part I), p. 229.

30 Statistical Atlas of the Madras Presidency, (1908) p.139.

31 1921 Madras Census, (Part I), p. 197.

Madura was the most important centre for dyeing yarn in the presidency. Madras, Chirala, Salem, and Kumarapalayam of Salem district came next in introducing foreign dyes.³² There were only four dye works employing ten or more people, one in Madura, one in Bellary, one in Krishna and one in Guntur.³³ In Guntur district, a large dye-house was there in Chirala. People engaged in dyeing in the district mainly belonged to the castes of Devangas, Vysyas and Telagas.³⁴

Except in places with large dye houses, usually a master dyer worked with the members of his family or with the aid of workers engaged for the purpose. Generally yarns were dyed on a small scale by the weavers themselves. When a Sowcar had a number of looms working under his control he either imported dyed yarn or owned a dye-house employing a group of dyers.³⁵

Madras presidency took about a quarter of the total quantity of alizarine (dye) imported into India. Though the presidency's share in the import of aniline (dye) was a little less than 10 per cent, the quantity taken showed a steady increase.³⁶

32 N.G. Ranga, op.cit., p. 116.

33 1921 Madras Census (Part I), p. 197.

34 G.O. 2058, 21 August 1939 of Development Department (MS. Series), Madras Government, p. 6.

35 1931 Madras Census (Part I), pp. 229-230.

36 Ibid.

IV

Handlooms vis-a-vis MillsConsumption of yarn by handlooms

The Board of Revenue of the Madras government instituted enquiries into the condition of the weaving industry in 1871 and 1890. Total quantity of twist worked up into cloth in 1871 was estimated by them at 31.5 million lbs. of which 11.5 million lbs. was imported and 20 million lbs. spun in the country. In 1890, the quantity of twist made into cloth was estimated at 34.5 million lbs, an increase of nearly 10 per cent, of which 19 millions were imported, one million was manufactured in the Indian mills and 14.5 millions handmade.³⁷ In the twentieth century, handspun yarn became almost extinct. Table below shows us the situation in 1940 in Madras and also other provinces.

TABLE 4.15

Annual Consumption of Cotton Yarn by
Handlooms
(in million lbs.)

| Province | Indian mill yarn | Imported mill yarn | Hand-spun yarn | Total |
|-------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|-------|
| Bengal | 25.06 | 4.41 | .17 | 29.64 |
| Bombay | 39.83 | 3.83 | 3.09 | 46.75 |
| C.P.& Berar | 21.35 | .29 | .12 | 21.76 |
| Madras | 75.48 | 5.83 | .82 | 82.13 |
| Punjab | 12.31 | 1.19 | 35.38 | 48.88 |
| U.P. | 43.05 | 1.65 | 6.51 | 51.21 |

Source : FFC Report, p. 105.

37 S. Srinivasa Raghavaiyengar, Memorandum on the Progress of the Madras Presidency during the last forty years of British Administration, (Government of Madras, Madras, 1893). p. 94.

Consumption of yarn by handlooms in the Madras province increased steadily except during 1900-05 and 1915-20. Famine of 1900-02 and the World War I were the factors behind this temporary regression. Average consumption of during the decade ending 1920-21 was 59 million lbs. which was nearly a quarter of all-India consumption. It is not possible to estimate with any accuracy the consumption in the subsequent period as the compilation of rail-borne statistics in Madras was stopped since 1921. All India consumption increased to an average of 313 million lbs. during 1921-31 decade and if the share of Madras presidency can be assumed to be the same as that of the previous decade, Madras consumption can be estimated at 75.7 million lbs.³⁸

Range of cotton yarns used in Madras was much wider than that of most other provinces except Bengal. Principal centres of silk yarn consumption were in the districts of East Godavari, Anantapur, Chingleput, Thanjavur and Coimbatore. Centres for the consumption of artificial silk yarn were Kurnool, Madura, Ramnad, Tirunelveli and Guntur. Cotton yarn was almost wholly supplied by the spinning mills of South India. Silk yarn was imported from Japan and China. Artificial silk yarn was obtained from Japan and Italy.³⁹ In the 1921-30 decade, handloom weavers took increasingly to the use of artificial silk yarn as weft and also warp in

38 1931 Madras Census (Part I), p. 227.

39 FFC Report, p. 103.

the weaving of borders in saris and dhotis. Number of looms engaged in the weaving of artificial silk fabrics was 17,693.⁴⁰

TABLE 4.16

Artificial silk yarn consumed by Handlooms
(1942)

| Province | In lbs. |
|----------|-----------|
| Bihar | 588,700 |
| Punjab | 3,750,000 |
| U.P. | 367,000 |
| C.P. | 120,000 |
| Madras | 1,857,794 |

Source : FFC Report, p. 109.

Three-quarters of cotton yarn used by Madras handlooms was of the counts 11-40. Cloth woven by them was neither of a very coarse variety nor of a high texture.⁴¹ Relatively speaking, yarn consumed in Madras was lower in counts as compared to Bengal and Bombay, and much higher as compared to Punjab, U.P., C.P. and Berar.

⁴⁰ 1931 Madras Census (Part I), p. 228.

⁴¹ Yarn consumption in Guntur district was confined to the counts of 40-49 (428,000 lbs.), 50-89 (158,615 lbs.) and artificial silk yarn (413,440 lbs.) G.O. 2058, 21 August 1939, Development Department (MS Series), Government of Madras.

TABLE 4.17

Annual Consumption (According to Counts) of
Cotton Yarn by Handlooms (1942)

| Province | C o u n t s o f Y a r n | | | | | Total |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|
| | 1-10 | 11-20 | 21-30 | 31-40 | Above 40 | |
| Bengal | 0.44 (1.5%) | 2.52 (8.5%) | 14.82 (50%) | 5.93 (20%) | 5.93 (20%) | 29.64 |
| Bombay | 2.81 (6%) | 4.67 (10%) | 14.96 (32%) | 12.62 (27%) | 11.69 (25%) | 46.75 |
| Madras | 6.13 (7.44%) | 28.86 (35.15%) | 13.99 (17.04%) | 17.58 (21.41%) | 15.57 (18.96%) | 82.13 |
| Punjab | 31.25 (63.93%) | 12.81 (26.21%) | 1.88 (3.85%) | 0.94 (1.92%) | 2.00 (4.09%) | 48.88 |
| U.P. | 14.79 (28.89%) | 28.31 (55.29%) | 4.31 (8.40%) | 2.15 (4.20%) | 1.65 (3.22%) | 51.21 |
| C.P. & Berar | 2.58 (11.83%) | 13.00 (59.71%) | 3.46 (15.87%) | 1.79 (8.2%) | 0.93 (4.39%) | 21.76 |

Source : FFC Report, p. 113.

Competition between Mills and Handlooms

A duty of 3.5% was levied in the late 19th century on imported mill cloth. A countervailing excise duty of 3.5% was imposed on Indian mill made cloth first in 1896. But there was no import duty on yarn. Handlooms enjoyed a slight advantage because of this. SWADESHI movement also helped handlooms.

Removal of excise duty on mill cloth after 1925 and the imposition of high tariff against imported yarn and cloth enabled the mills to expand their production considerably. Imports of cloth into India fell from 3197 million yards in 1913-14 to 1564 million yards by 1925-26 and further to 591 million yards by 1937-38. During the same period mill production in India rose from 1171 million yards in 1913-14 to 1965 million yards by 1925-6 and 3662 million yards by 1937-38.⁴²

In 1932, Tariff Board stated that the competition between handlooms and mills was most severe in the medium counts of 21-50s, a range where the proportion of handloom weavers' output was but small. For counts below 20s, handlooms had an advantage over mills and for counts 60s and above, there wasn't much competition.⁴³ The competition in high counts was with imported cloth (mostly Japanese). By and by, a much larger proportion of the handloom output

42. FFC Report, p.11.

43. Ibid., p.160.

Table 4.18: Progress of Mill and Handloom Industries (1901-39)

| Average for | Mill Production | | | Handloom Production | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| | Mill Pro- duction (million yards) | Proportion to total production in India | Proportion to total cloth avai- lable for consumption | Handloom production (million yards) | Proportion to total Indian production | Proportion to total cloth avai- lable for consumption |
| 1901-2 to 1905-6 | 593 | 40% | 14% | 906 | 60% | 26% + |
| 1921-2 to 1925-6 | 1,805 | 66% | 41% | 948 | 34% | 24% |
| 1934-5 to 1938-9 | 3,433 | 71% | 61% | 1,394 | 29% | 25% |
| % Increase in produc- tion from the first to the last quinquen- nium | 479% | - | - | 54% | - | - |
| % Increase in produc- tion from the second to third quinquennium | 90% | - | - | 47% | - | - |

+ Exports of Handloom cloth not known and hence not deducted from handloom production.

Source: FFC Report, p.194.

was made from the counts 21-50s. In the years after the report of the Tariff Board (1932), Indian mills spun yarn of higher counts and manufactured finer saris and dhotis.

Low prices of finer mill cloth caused a notable shift in demand throughout the country from coarse to medium and fine fabrics. After 1925, some important changes also occurred in the fashions and cloth requirements of the people especially of the middle classes and the mills adjusted their production more readily than handlooms and reaped the profits. It was mostly in Bengal, Bombay and Madras that saris and dhotis of finer counts were produced in large quantities by handlooms. When mill made saris and dhotis became popular, handloom products lost ground.⁴⁴

In the Madras province, principal classes of cloth for whose production handlooms and mills competed were dhotis, saris, towels, sheets, shirtings, coatings and lungis.⁴⁵ Handlooms had an advantage over mills with regard to weaving multi-coloured varieties of cloth which could not be economically produced in the mills. Solid-bordered saris, striped and checked saris with variegated colours and designed borders, cotton and silk mixed saris, check lungis, kailis, Madras handkerchiefs and so on. Technical superiority of the handloom in weaving delicate

44 Ibid., p. 161.

45 B.S. Baliga, op.cit., p. 32.

fabrics using high count yarn with complicated designs and cloth of striped and check patterns was an advantage and mills did not find it worthwhile to produce small quantities of certain fabrics for which the demand was necessarily limited.

Mills enjoyed an advantage in the manufacture of grey goods of plain weave, twills, drills, jeans, satin, saris without stripes or checks, grey or dyed chaddars, dhotis, ordinary shirtings and coatings because these articles were suitable for mass production.

Handloom weavers, due to their ignorance and conservatism, failed to adjust their lines of production and types of design to suit modern requirements. Quality of handloom cloth, under the stress of competition, deteriorated in certain places. Complaints were heard from customers regarding dimensions, weight, ends and picks per inch etc. which usually injured the reputation of all fabrics of that class.

V

Organization of Industry

Independent weaving, weavers working under the control of sowcars or master weavers, factory system and weavers' cooperative societies were the four main forms of organization of handloom industry in the Madras presidency.⁴⁶

46 A peculiar feature of handloom weaving was that the people who manufactured looms, shuttles and other mechanical instruments were entirely different from those who wove. In the Telugu districts, they belonged

TABLE 4.19

Classification of Weavers (1942)

| Province | Independent Weavers | % of Total | Weavers Working under Mahajans | % of Total | Weavers in Karkhanas | % of Total | Members of Co-operative Societies | % of Total | TOTAL |
|--------------|---------------------|------------|--------------------------------|------------|----------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|---------|
| Bengal | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 201,979 |
| Bombay | 23,800 | 21 | 28,000 | 24 | 63,300 | 54 | 2,000 | 1 | 117,100 |
| C.P. & Berar | 56,747 | 80 | 12,670 | 18 | 1,843 | 2 | 130 | - | 71,390 |
| Madras | 119,760 | 28 | 256,630 | 60 | 34,218 | 8 | 17,108 | 4 | 427,716 |
| Punjab | 206,631 | 58 | 139,275 | 39 | 6,400 | 2 | 3,548 | 1 | 355,854 |
| U.P. | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 244,712 |

Source : FFC Report, p. 71.

TABLE 4.20

Weavers of Guntur Town

| Independent | Working for Sowcars | Coolie Weavers |
|-------------|---------------------|----------------|
| 2397(21%) | 7909(71%) | 824(8%) |

Source: G.O. 2058, 21 August 1939 of Development Department (Misc. Series) Madras Government, p. 12.

Cont'd.. f.n. 46

to the Viswabrahmin caste and in the Tamil districts to the Kammalar caste. See N.G. Ranga, op.cit., p.115.

Independent weaver owned his loom and other small instruments of production.⁴⁷ He bought yarn and other raw materials directly and sold the finished product in the open market. He bore the risk due to fluctuations in prices of yarn or cloth.⁴⁸

In the second type of organization, master weaver or the sowcar was the central figure. He supplied yarn and other raw materials to a group of weavers working under him. He collected the cloth woven by them and sold it in the best market he could choose. Weavers were paid only wages at specified rates. Their earnings were not affected by changing market conditions.⁴⁹

In most cases, master weaver was also a cloth merchant. Weavers worked at home either with their own looms, or with those hired out by the master weaver or his agent.

47 The following discussion is based mainly on B.V. Narayanaswamy Naidu, op.cit., pp. 6-7.

48 Independent weavers formed about 30 per cent of the total weavers in Madras province. They were better off than the other weavers. There was a limited increase in their numbers between 1910 and 1930, according to N.G. Ranga. Small employers and petty merchants rose from the ranks of these independent weavers. See N.G. Ranga, op.cit., p. 39.

49 Talking about the subjugation of weavers to middlemen, Levkovsky wrote, "The plight of the small weavers grew worse in proportion to their dependence upon merchant and usurer capital, which had blossomed forth in all its glory in the rank and mouldering atmosphere of colonial oppression. The small producer was exploited at three points: when raw material was sold to him, when he surrendered his goods for marketing, and when he asked for credit." A.I. Levkovsky, Capitalism in India: Basic Trends in its Development (PPH, Delhi, 1972), p. 206.

Wherever the master weaver was a big businessman and employed a large number of weavers scattered in more than one village whom he might not know personally, he engaged a head weaver in each village to look after his interests. The head weaver for all practical purposes became the employer of labour. He gave the yarn, tested the quality of the woven fabric, paid the wages and served as a deputy to master weaver. He took some commission out of the disbursements he made on behalf of the master weaver.

Factory system was the third important type of organization. This system was mainly important on the west coast and some Tamil districts and not so much in the Circars. Small factories employing five to ten weavers were more common. Weavers worked during specified hours and were usually paid fixed wages. All processes from the dyeing of yarn to the finishing of cloth including marketing were done under the same roof.

The other system was the weavers' cooperative society for production and/or sale. The societies distributed yarn to the members after getting their ration cards. Members of the society were paid pre-determined fixed wages. The cloth was taken by the society and sold direct to dealers and consumers or through a centralized provincial cooperative society. Though cooperative societies became slightly more popular by the late 1930s, they were only of marginal significance in the province.

Factory system also never became popular. Madras

government opined that the individual weaver suffered because he was still trying to carry on a complex series of operations without recognition of the advantages of subdivision of labour.⁵⁰ They felt that the factory system would be more advantageous. But weaving was mainly a home industry in the Madras province where men, women and children worked together. Factory system dispensed with this advantage and rendered the women and children in the weaver's family unemployed, and therefore it was not accepted by the weavers.⁵¹

Marketing and Trade

In villages and remote places, handloom cloth was sold in weekly fairs, where mill cloth and other daily necessities of life were also marketed. Some of the fairs were also biweekly. Weavers also bought their yarn here. In the smaller shandies, handloom cloth predominated whereas mill cloth was more popular in the bigger ones. There were special fairs and exhibitions held during important local festivals where handloom cloth was sold. Besides these, there were regular markets in large as well as small towns where handloom weavers could sell their cloth daily in regular shops or middlemen's depots.⁵²

50 1911 Madras Census (Part I), Note by A. Chatterton on Industrial Occupations, p. 209.

51 Evidence of P. Thyagaraya Chetti before the Indian Industrial Commission, Report of the Indian Industrial Commission, Minutes of Evidence, Vol. III (Madras and Bangalore), (Calcutta, 1918), p. 56.

52 FFC Report, p. 137.

Chirala and Perala were the main marketing centres for handloom products in Guntur district. Most of the big handloom merchants in the district were Vaisyas. There were also some Devanga and Padmasale merchants who were not so rich as the Vaisyas. Vaisyas monopolised the business of importing yarn from Madras and Bombay and sold it to other Vaisya, Devanga and Padmasale merchants.⁵³ Most of the weavers gave out yarn to scores of weavers dependent on each of them and paid them piece work wages.

Trade in Madras Handkerchiefs

Madras handkerchiefs were chiefly produced in the area around Madras, namely Chingleput, Nellore, Chittoor, North Arcot and Guntur and exported to West Africa by a few exporting houses in Madras.⁵⁴ They constituted a very important section of the cotton handloom weaving industry employing 40,000 looms in 1930.⁵⁵

Export trade in Madras handkerchiefs went back to the days of the East India Company. Earlier on, public sales were held in London every three months at which these handkerchiefs were sold by public auction. In the later period, exporting firms in Madras entered into direct business relations with firms in London, Manchester and Liverpool and a large intrepot trade developed for several years.

53 N.G. Ranga, op.cit., p. 38.

54 FFC Report, p. 147.

55 1931 Madras Census (Part I), p. 228.

Firms dealing in Madras handkerchiefs employed designers for evolving new designs. Exporting houses did not carry on direct business with the weavers. Through the Dubashes, export firms issued yarn to master weavers who were to deliver the finished product in a specified time. South India enjoyed a monopoly for the supply of Madras handkerchiefs to West Africa.

The Madras handkerchief trade suffered because of the trade slump. Growing exports of cheaper imitation Madras handkerchiefs from Europe and Japan also considerably affected this trade. Value of exports fell from Rs. 179.2 lakhs in 1929-30 to Rs. 45.9 lakhs in 1934-35.⁵⁶ The number of looms engaged in the manufacture of Madras handkerchiefs was estimated in 1940 at 10,000, a steep decline from the 1931 Census figure of 40,000.⁵⁷

Trade in Kailis

Kailis was the name given to Muhammadan clothing susis were worn by Muslim women and lungis by Muslim men. Both susis and lungis were called kailis. Large quantities of kailis were exported to Burma, Federated Malay states, Ceylon, Siam, Borneo, Java, Sumatra and parts of Africa. The important centres in the Circars for the manufacture of kailis were Kalahasti, Venkatagiri, Ellore, Pedama, Chirala and Vetapalem. The last two centres were in the Guntur district.

56 FFC Report, p. 19.

57 Ibid., p. 148.

All these centres had the same kind of organization with regard to the production and marketing of kailis. Merchants bought their yarn in Madras and gave it out to weavers to be worked into kaili pieces. Merchants went to Madras to sell the cloth. During the Ramzan season most Muslims bought their clothing for the following year. A fortnight before Ramzan, Madras merchants went to the merchants in various places to buy the quantity they wanted. This was the only occasion when the Madras merchants went to buy pieces. On all other occasions, merchants of the manufacturing centres went to Madras and canvassed for orders. They often had to stay for long for satisfactory prices or had to dispose off their goods at cheap rates owing to the dullness of the market. Madras merchants dictated their own terms. In Guntur district, Bandla Bapayya of Vetapalem was the only merchant of mofussil who ventured into international trade and organized the market in Singapore. He made a lot of money and helped the Vitapalem weavers to get better wages. All the other merchants of the district relied upon the Madras exporters.⁵⁸

Foreign cloth or mill cloth did not come into competition with the kailis because they satisfied the special demands of the consumers. There were so many different designs and patterns for each of which there was only a small demand. Therefore it was not feasible to manufacture

them on machine looms.⁵⁹

Trade Depression affected kailis also. Merchants in Madras accumulated huge stocks and did not know how to sell them. Market for kailis never quite recovered from the import of the Depression. In the Krishna and Guntur districts, weavers changed over to the production of mostly coloured saris.⁶⁰

TABLE 4.21

Export of Madras Handkerchiefs, Lungis and Kailis from Madras

| Year | Madras Handkerchiefs | | <u>Lungis</u> and <u>Kailis</u> | |
|---------|----------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| | (In Millions) | (Rs. Lakhs) | (In Millions) | (Rs. Lakhs) |
| 1914-15 | 1.4 | 8.2 | 19.3 | 72.0 |
| 1920-21 | 2.0 | 28.6 | 21.9 | 149.8 |
| 1924-25 | 3.4 | 43.5 | 31.5 | 178.5 |
| 1929-30 | 4.8 | 43.5 | 25.7 | 135.7 |
| 1930-31 | 2.6 | 21.4 | 19.2 | 97.6 |
| 1931-32 | 3.5 | 22.6 | 15.1 | 75.9 |
| 1932-33 | 5.1 | 36.3 | 13.6 | 65.2 |
| 1933-34 | 3.5 | 18.4 | 5.6 | 27.8 |
| 1934-35 | 1.3 | 12.4 | 6.6 | 33.5 |

Source : FFC Report, p. 19.

59 Ibid., p. 32.

60 FFC Report, p. 178.

Handloom Centres in Madras Province

According to 1931 Census, Cuddapah, Chingleput and Salem had over 40 male weavers per 1000 males of all occupations. Guntur, Coimbatore, Visakhapatnam, Nellore, Bellary, Anantapur, Madras and North Arcot came next in importance with over 30 but less than 40 per thousand. East Godavari, Kurnool, Tirunelveli, Ganjam and Chittoor districts had over 20 but less than 30 per thousand. All other districts of the province had less than 20 per thousand.⁶¹ Chief centres of weaving were Madura, Chirala (Guntur district), Kumbakonam, Thanjavur, Coimbatore, Senni-malai (Coimbatore district), Conjeevaram, Dharmavaram (Anantapur district).⁶²

Hereditary castes of handloom weavers in the province were Kaikolars, Devangas, Padmasales, and Sourashtras. Kaikolars and Sourashtras were settled in the Tamil districts. Sales and Devangas were the main weaving castes in the Circars and the ceded districts of the province.⁶³

Principal types of handloom cloth produced in the Madras province were saris, dhotis, angavastrams, towels, lungis, sarams, kailis, Madras handkerchiefs, turban cloth, bed-sheets, furnishing fabrics, shirtings, coatings and so

⁶¹ K.S. Venkataraman, The Handloom Industry in South India, (University of Madras, Madras, 1940), p. 21.

⁶² G.O. No. 2058, 21 August 1939, Development Department (MS Series), Madras Government, p. 2.

⁶³ Padmasalis, Pattusalis, Devangas and Jandras were the weaving castes in Guntur district, ibid., p. 12.

on. Important silk as well as artificial silk goods were saris, coatings, shirtings, angavastrams and lungis.

Chirala, Perala, Pandillapalli, Ipurupalem ^{and Vetapalem} were the five important places in the district with more than 6000 looms. Chirala and Perala were the marketing centres for these places, and Chirala was the most important weaving centre in the district.⁶⁴ Manufacture of Kailis in Chirala started around 1910 and made good progress upto 1930.⁶⁵ Coloured and plain grey saris with borders were woven at Chirala. Chirala, Mangalagiri and Guntur were noted for medium count saris and dhotis. Coloured saris became the dominant item of manufacture after 1930 replacing lungis and kailis.

Various types of cloth and quantities manufactured in the Guntur district are given below:

TABLE 4.22
Handloom Cloth in Guntur District

| | Type | Quantity in lbs. |
|--------|----------------------|------------------|
| Cotton | <u>Dhotis</u> | 129,630 |
| | Upper Cloths | 69,345 |
| | Shirtings | - |
| | <u>Lungis</u> | 74,400 |
| | London handkerchiefs | 141,500 |
| | Saris | 156,040 |
| | <u>Silk Saris</u> | 280,600 |

Source: G.O. No. 2058, 21 August 1939, Development Department (Misc. Series) Madras Govt., p. 19.

64 N.G. Ranga, op.cit., p. 38.

65 Ibid., p. 118.

VI

Living Conditions of Weavers

With the demise of hand spinning, a substantial number of people dependent on it lost their livelihood. Women in the weavers families were engaged in handspinning. This acted as an additional pressure on the weaving industry. This factor, coupled with Manchester competition drastically reduced the profits of the weavers.

After the turn of the century handloom production increased substantially in South India. This increase was facilitated by the substitution of fly-shuttle looms for throw-shuttle looms. This increase in production did not lead to any improvement in the condition of weavers.⁶⁶

If the weaver did not get a reasonable return from his loom, he worked harder and longer to make up by quantity what he lost in value. Most weavers continued to ply the loom even if they barely got the price of yarn used in the making of cloth. Weaving was the only work known to them, and no alternative occupations were open. The only choice was to take up some general unskilled labour or live on alms. Most weavers, especially those belonging to the hereditary weaving castes were thus helpless.⁶⁷

66 FFC Report, p. 195. Necessity to keep handloom cloth competitive with mill cloth by reducing the prices, increasing price of yarn, compulsive dependence on middlemen for marketing, free competition conditions within the handloom industry were probably the factors that kept the wages down.

67 FFC Report, p. 196

Weavers were accustomed to work under shade. Their work was monotonous and sedentary. They were physically feeble and did not have the capacity to do heavy manual work.⁶⁸

Influx of new comers into the weaving profession was the largest in Madras and Bengal. In some areas, this influx resulted in increased competition among the weavers and a fall in earnings. Unregulated increase in production may also have weakened the position of handlooms vis-a-vis mills.⁶⁹

Wages of Weavers

A wide range of handloom products were produced by weavers of different classes who practised their respective occupations under different conditions and their earnings varied accordingly. With regard to similar varieties of cloth also, wages varied from place to place. Wages varied in the same place according to the counts used and patterns produced and according to the conditions of employment (whether the weaver was an independent worker or a factory worker and so on).⁷⁰

Monthly earnings of weavers in the Madras province fell drastically from the pre-depression period to the post-

68 B.V. Narayanaswamy Naidu, op.cit., p. 6.

69 FFC Report, p. 65.

70 1931 Madras Census (Part I), p. 229. Weavers engaged in the production of head rumals, Madras handkerchiefs and Kailis got better wages than the weavers producing other classes of cloth. See N.C. Report, p. 229.

depression period. For example, monthly earnings of handloom weavers of two places in the Guntur district in 1928 and 1941 are given below:

TABLE 4.23

Wages of Guntur Weavers

| | 1928 (Rs. As. Ps) | 1941 (Rs. As. Ps) | %Decrease |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Chirala | 12-8-0 to 18-12-0 | 6-5-6 | 59 (average) |
| Mangalagiri | 12-8-0 to 18-12-0 | 8-0-0 to 9-0-0 | 46 (average) |

Source : FFC Report, p. 119.

N.G. Ranga observed that a weaver on the margin of subsistence maintained a lower standard of living even as compared to the corresponding agricultural labourer of the Guntur delta. Panchamas (untouchables) who worked as agricultural labourers worked outdoors and spent more on meat and fish than many weavers. Weavers were obliged to spend more on festivals, social ceremonies, subscriptions and travelling because they belonged to a higher social standard than Panchamas.

Weavers paid rates in many municipalities of the Circars including Chirala and Guntur, and many unions including Vetapalem. Weavers also paid a professional tax in Chirala. Yet none of these municipalities or unions took

any steps like the establishment of spinning and weaving schools. Chirala and Vetapalem were also famous for their dyeing industry, yet no attempt was made to establish a technical school in that art.⁷¹

Weavers' quarters at Guntur was a thatched shed sixty feet long and twenty feet wide divided into five huts by means of bamboo screens. Each hut was occupied by a weaver's family. The mud floor of these huts was on the same level as the dirty narrow lane outside overflowing with sewage water. In each small hut like that, one or two fit looms were erected. Rest of the space was covered with mud vessels, a dark oven, firewood, a clothesline with a few rags and mats and a small cot of coir ropes. Number of inmates in each of these huts was four or five, with little privacy for any one.⁷²

In Chirala and Vetapalem, there was too much of congestion in the weavers' quarters and weavers suffered heavy mortality from the attacks of cholera, plague, influenza and other fevers.⁷³

Though weavers to a large extent were inhabitants of towns where educational facilities existed, they were unable to give their children even the most elementary education.⁷⁴ The more widespread weaving castes like the

71 N.G. Ranga, op.cit., p. 111.

72 B.V. Narayanaswamy Naidu, op.cit., p. 28.

73 N.G. Ranga, op.cit., p. 192.

74 Alfred Chatterton, Agricultural and Industrial Problems in India (G.A. Natesan, Madras, n.d.), p. 120.

Padmasales, Devangas organized associations and convened all India conferences for the discussion of common problems. But they could not help the weavers in actually solving their problems.⁷⁵

Summing Up

The handloom industry in Madras was in a prosperous state upto the end of the seventeenth century. Because of its orientation towards the export market, it was an urban phenomenon. Though the weavers received advances from the merchants of the European companies, they were not in a bad bargaining position. But there was a change in the scenario from the end of the seventeenth century. Because of the monopolistic hold acquired by the English company over the market and the prohibitory laws against the import of Indian handlooms into England, handlooms declined as an urban phenomenon. It retreated to villages where production met the local demand.

Handloom production as an urban phenomenon arose again towards the end of the nineteenth century under a totally different set of circumstances. Helped by the growth of population and increased prosperity, production of handlooms expanded in the favourable milieu of cheaper mill yarn and new loom technology. Under the new set-up, weavers required credit for the purchase of yarn and depended on

⁷⁵ FPC Report, p. 69.

dealers and financiers. They took advances from middlemen and lost their independence. They also depended on middlemen for the sale of the finished product in the market.

But the factors that led to the resurgence of handlooms also ensured that its growth would only be limited. Though mill yarn was cheaper than handspun yarn, since the weavers were utterly dependent on it, its price could always be increased, as it in fact was, to the detriment of weavers. And handloom cloth had also to compete with cheaper and finer mill cloth.

Thus what Levkovsky called 'lower forms of capitalist enterprise' got established in the handloom industry with the domination of merchant and usurer capital.⁷⁶ This along with the severity of mill competition and the absence of any alternate employment of the weavers led to a deterioration of their condition.

75 FFC Report, p. 69.

76 A.I. Levkovsky, op.cit., p. 195.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In the early part of the 19th century, agricultural in Guntur decayed and stagnated, like in other districts of Coastal Andhra. Depression in agricultural prices, famines and a heavy tax burden combined to keep agriculture in that condition. But in the post-Krishna anicut period, in a new and favourable milieu, agricultural economy started showing an upward trend. This new phase was marked by the emergence of paddy as the most significant foodgrain, a general and rapid increase in the acreage under cultivation and an increasing shift in the direction of commercial crops.

Introduction of irrigation greatly aided the paddy economy. External demand for cotton greatly stimulated the local cotton economy of the district. Guntur town first came into prominence because of the cotton trade. Cotton trade also drew the services like banking to the district. A number of export firms in cotton set up offices in the district. Modernization of transport network in the region also resulted in an increase in commerce, both internal and external.

Cotton exports from the district were considerable. But then, they were marked with violent fluctuations. External demand factor was acting too strongly in the case of cotton.

While in paddy's case, most of the exports from the district were to places within the Presidency and a few places in the Bombay Presidency. That was why paddy was hit by bad prices only during the world depression of 1929 when such an impact was uniform.

Komatis or Vaisyas were the traditional mercantile community of the region who took to the dealings in increasing commodity trade in the towns. In the later years, some of the rich agriculturists also entered this field. Profits of trade and agriculture, both flourishing fields, were spent in reinvestment in trade, land, money-lending and to an extent in agro-industry. After a stage when the acreage under cultivation was not expanding rapidly, investment in land only helped to raise its price to an exorbitant level. House-building activity also took up a lot of the surpluses.

In the case of handlooms, revival was aided by the availability of cheaper mill yarn, new fly-shuttle technology and expanding market (consequent on increasing prosperity among certain sections of the society and general increase of population). But it was a small-scale industry which could register ~~only limited~~ growth in the face of the competition from mill cloth. It nevertheless managed to survive and provided employment to thousands of weavers.

Number of towns like Guntur, Tenali and Narasaraopet of Guntur district were essentially market towns which were seats of trade in agricultural commodities. Even till this date, these towns retain this basic characteristic. Growth of tertiary sector and migration of population from rural to urban were the crucial factors in the growth of these towns. Industry was never important. This was probably because of the natural limitations of the region as a whole and the lack of state policy of active encouragement to industrialization. This scenario has continued into the post-1947 situation. Andhra is even today an industrially backward region. The prospect of agro-industry is limited beyond a point. Trade, house construction activity, and investment in the film industry of Madras have been the main areas of surplus or profit investment.

Economic growth after 1860s did not have a uniform impact on various sections of the society. In the agrarian society, large landowning groups benefited immensely. Middle stratum of the peasantry also seems to have benefited by production for the market. But, poor ryots had not much surplus to sell and therefore were not benefited much by price increases. Agricultural labourers suffered a ~~decline~~ decline in their condition in the second half of the 19th century. In the twentieth, their condition probably improved slightly because of the large-scale seasonal demand for labour in the deltaic taluks.

On the whole, the traders and middlemen established a firm grip over the agrarian economy by controlling both the commodity and agricultural credit markets. This happened in the case of handloom industry also where weavers predominantly lost their independence and relied on the middlemen both for the supply of yarn and the marketing of their product. This heavy dependence reduced their wages to an abysmal level. Their economic condition was probably worse than that of agricultural labourers.

-

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES:

a. Government of India:

✓ Indian Cotton Committee, Minutes of Evidence, (Calcutta, 1920) Vol. II - Agricultural, Part II.

✓ Indian Cotton Committee, Minutes of Evidence, (Calcutta, 1920) Vol. V - Commercial, Part II.

✓ Indian Industrial Commission, Minutes of Evidence, (Calcutta, 1918) Vol. III - Madras and Bangalore.

✓ Minutes of Evidence before the Indian Cotton Committee, (Calcutta, 1920), Vol. V - Commercial, Part II.

✓ Report of the Fact-Finding Committee (Handloom & Mills), (Delhi, 1942).

b. Government of Madras:

Baliga, B.S., Compendium on the History of the Handloom Industry in Madras (Madras, 1960).

Indian Irrigation Commission (1901-02), Minutes of Evidence, Madras (Madras, 1903).

Land Revenue Settlement Scheme Report of the Guntur Division of the Krishna District (Madras, 1868) in Board of Revenue Proceedings of March 9, 1870.

Mackenzie, Gordon, A Manual of the Krishna District in the Presidency of Madras (Madras, 1883).

Madras District Gazetteers.

Statistical Appendix for Guntur District (1906).

Statistical Appendix for Guntur District (1915).

Statistical Appendix for Guntur District (1929).

Statistical Appendix for Guntur District (1933).

TH-3478



Minutes of Evidence before the Indian Irrigation Commission (1901-02), Madras Evidence (Madras, 1903).

Narayanaswami Naidu, B.V., Report of the Court of Enquiry into Labour Conditions in the Handloom Industry (Madras, 1948).

Paddison, G.F., First Resettlement Scheme Report of Guntur District in Madras Government, Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture) Proceedings No.463, 17 December 1903.

Raghavaiyengar, S. Srinivasa, Memorandum on the Progress of the Madras Presidency during the last 40 years of British administration, (Madras, 1893).

Report of the Economic Depression Enquiry Committee, (Chairman H.A.B. Vermon) in Madras Government, Revenue Dept. Proceedings G.O. No. 948, May 1, 1931.

Report of the Madras Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee (Madras, 1930), vol.I-V.

Satyanathan, W.R.S., Report on Agricultural Indebtedness (Madras, 1935).

Srinivasan, C.R., Report of the rice production and trade in the Madras Presidency, (Madras, 1934).

Statistical Atlas of the Madras Presidency;

Corrected upto 1892-93 (1894).

Corrected upto 1900-01 (1908).

Corrected upto 1910-11 (1911).

Corrected upto 1920-21 (1921).

Corrected upto 1930-31 (1935).

Corrected upto 1940-41 (1949).

Survey of the Cotton Handloom Industry in the Madras Presidency (Madras, 1939) also in Madras govt., Development Dept. (Miscellaneous series) G.O. 2058, 21 Aug. 1939.

Venkateswaran, S., Second Resettlement Scheme Report of Guntur District, in Madras Government, Revenue Dept. Proceedings, G.O.No.1390 (Confidential), 29 July 1936.

Vipan, A., Scheme of Road Development for the Madras Presidency (Madras, 1935) also in Madras Govt., Proceedings of the Local Self-Govt. Dept. (Local & Municipal) G.O.4576, November 6, 1935.

Wheeler, J. Talboys, Handbook to the Cotton Cultivation in the Madras Presidency, (Madras, 1862).

c. Other Sources:

Andhra Pradesh District Gazetteers, Guntur, (Hyderabad: Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, 1977).

British House of Commons, Parliamentary Paper No.132, East India (Cotton), Cotton Cultivation in India & Prospect of Supplies of that Article to England, (London, 1863).

Evidence before the Royal Commission on Labour in India, Evidence - Vol.VII, Part I, Madras Presidency and Coorg (London, 1930).

United States, Department of Agriculture Bulletin No.33, The Cotton Plant, Its History, Botany, Chemistry, Culture, Enemies and Uses (Washington, 1896).

SECONDARY SOURCES:

Baker, C.J., An Indian Rural Economy, 1880-1955 The Tamilnad countryside (Delhi: Oxford, 1984).

Bhatia, B.M., Famines in India - A Study in Some Aspects of the Economic History of India (1860-1945), (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1963).

Bhattacharya, Sabyasachi, "Cultural and Social Constraints on Technological Innovation & Economic Development: Some case studies", The Indian Economic and Social History Review (Delhi), Vol.III, No. 3. Sept. 1966. pp.240-67.

- Bhogendra Nath, N.C., Development of the Textile Industry in Madras (upto 1950), (Madras, University of Madras, 1957).
- Chatterton, Alfred, Agricultural and Industrial Problems in India (Madras: G.A. Natesan & Co., n.d.).
- _____, Industrial Evolution in India (Madras, n.p., n.d.).
- Duvvury, Nata, Commercial Capital and Agrarian Structure - A Study of Guntur Tobacco Economy, Ph.D. thesis (Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum), submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 1985.
- Frykenberg, R.E., Guntur District: 1788-1848 A History of Local Influence and Central Authority in South India (London: Oxford, 1965).
- Kumar, Dharma, Land and Caste in South India (London: Cambridge University Press, 1965).
- _____, (ed.), Cambridge Economic History of India Vol. II (Delhi: Orient Longman, 1984).
- Levkovsky, A.I., Capitalism in India: Basic Trends in its Development (Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1972).
- Raman Rao, A.V., Economic Development of Andhra Pradesh (1766-1957), (Bombay: Popular Book Depot, 1958).
- Ramaswamy, Vijaya, Textiles and Weavers in Medieval South India (Delhi: Oxford, 1985).
- Ranga, N.G., Economic Organisation of Indian village (Andhra Economic Series, No. 1) Vol. I - Deltaic Villages (Bezwada: 1926).
- _____, Economic Organisation of Indian Villages (Andhra Economic Series, No. 2) Vol. II, (Bombay: Taraporewala Sons & Co., 1929).
- _____, The Economics of Handloom (Bombay: Taraporewala Sons & Co., 1930).

- Rao, G.N., "Canal Irrigation and Agrarian Change in Modern Andhra: A Study of Godavari District, C. 1850-1890", The Indian Economic and Social History Review, vol.25, No.1 (1988), pp.25-60.
- _____, "Transition from Subsistence to Commercialised Agriculture: A Study of Krishna District of Andhra, C. 1850-1900", Economic & Political Weekly (Bombay) vol.XX, Nos.25 and 26. Review of Agriculture, June 22-29, 1985, pp.60-69.
- Sarada Raju, A., Economic Conditions in the Madras Presidency, 1800-1850 (Madras: University of Madras, 1941).
- Venkataraman, K.S., The Handloom Industry in South India (Madras: University of Madras, 1940).